

THE SOCIAL AND EVANGELISTIC WORK OF GEORGE WHITEFIELD

IN AMERICA

Submitted by Rev. J. Frank Alexander, Jr.,
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TO
ALL THOSE
WHO IN SINCERITY AND IN TRUTH
SEEK TO LEAD
HUMANITY TO OUR LORD

PREFACE

The following six questions have guided the preparation of this thesis on The Social And Evangelistic Work Of George Whitefield In America. What was Whitefield's background, education, religious experience, and success in the ministry before he came to America? What was the nature of Colonial America when he first came to these shores? Where did he travel during each of his seven visits to America? What social interests did he develop and to what degree was he active and effective in each? How extensive, how controversial, and how successful were his evangelistic efforts? And finally, of what value was his American ministry? The answering of these questions in a concise yet comprehensive manner is the burden of the six chapters of this thesis.

No attempt has been made in this present work to analyse Whitefield either as a theologian or as a sermon-builder. He was a Calvinist in his faith and in his preaching, but no one has ever seriously maintained that he was a great theologian. As for his sermons, though they were printed in large quantities and distributed from New Hampshire on the north to Georgia on the south, they do not in any sense adequately reflect Whitefield's preaching power.

The preparation of this thesis has been a thoroughly rewarding experience. It is impossible to follow Whitefield's evangelistic activity in America without realizing afresh that the fundamental mission of the church is to bring the lost of the human family into a saving knowledge of Christ. It is equally impossible to trace Whitefield's social activity in America without being reminded both by the strength and weakness of the evangelist's role in this sphere that the gospel has social implications and imperatives.

Preparatory research for the writing of these pages was conducted principally in the University of Pennsylvania library. I am, therefore, deeply grateful both to the officials of this library for the privilege of perusing Whitefield's writings in their original printed form as contained in the Curtis Collection and Rare Book Division and to the staff for kind assistance.

I also wish to express my gratitude to the Congressional Library, Duke University Library, the Public Library of Charlotte, North Carolina, and the Library of the Georgia State Teachers' College, Milledgeville, Georgia, for the use of their facilities.

The source materials used in the presentation of Whitefield's social and evangelistic work in America are chiefly four: Whitefield's Journals, to which is prefixed his "Short Account" and "Further Account"; The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M.A.; Memoirs Of the Life of the Reverend George Whitefield, M.A. by J. Gillies; and The Life Of The Rev. George Whitefield by L. Tyerman. Comment should be made in regard to each of these sources.

Whitefield's Journals were first published between 1738 and 1741; the "Short Account" in 1740; and the "Further Account" in 1747; they were reprinted in 1756 as revised, corrected, and abridged by Whitefield. They were not printed again until W. Wale's edition was published sometime after 1900 (no definite date of publication is indicated; there is sufficient evidence in the preface to conclude that the work was published after 1900). Because of the general accessibility of Wale's edition, it, rather than the original printings, is cited throughout this thesis, except in Chapter I.

The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M. A. were published in London in six volumes during the years 1771-1772. Shortly before his death in 1770, Whitefield had prepared this large collection of his work for the press. The six volumes contain all sermons and most of the tracts which had already been published, a select collection of letters, and some writings on various subjects never before printed. The entire collection is prefaced by an account of Whitefield's life compiled from original papers and letters. Along with his Journals, Whitefield's Works have been invaluable in the analysis and presentation of the great awakener's social and evangelistic efforts in America.

Memoirs of the Life of the Reverend George Whitefield, M. A. was written by Whitefield's close friend and companion in many travels, J. Gillies; this work has been published in numerous editions. Because of the confusion which would naturally result from citing page numbers in any one of these editions, it has been deemed wise to cite the chapters in which the references are found (there are twenty-one chapters, and all are reasonably brief).

The Life Of The Rev. George Whitefield by L. Tyerman was published in London in two volumes (Volume I in 1876 and Volume II in 1877) and is by far the most comprehensive and scholarly work produced during the nineteenth century on Whitefield's life and ministry. This monumental work contains certain letters and accounts of controversies which are not found elsewhere.

American Standardized spelling has been used in the writings of this thesis. All quotations, however, are faithfully rendered as they are found in the sources indicated.

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CHAPTER I

THE LIFE OF WHITEFIELD TO HIS EMBARKING FOR AMERICA

1714 - 1738

George Whitefield was born December 16, 1714, in the Bell Inn of Gloucester, England. His parents, Thomas and Elizabeth Whitefield, were rearing a family of five sons and a daughter, and George was their seventh and last child.

Although the Whitefield family occupied a humble position at the time of George's birth, it was not without former prestige. George's great-grandfather was the Rev. Samuel Whitefield, an Anglican minister, who served as rector of North Ledyard¹ in Wiltshire and later of Rockhampton. Andrew Whitefield, George's grandfather, was a man of considerable wealth and influence; he is described by Gillies as "a private gentleman" who, with his wife and fourteen children, lived in retirement upon his estate.²

George's father, Thomas Whitefield, could boast of neither position nor wealth. He married Elizabeth Edwards, and first settled in business as a wine merchant in Bristol. He and his family later moved to Gloucester to manage the Bell Inn. He died at Christmas time, 1716,³ leaving his wife with the

¹Tyerman states that there is no "North Ledyard" in Wiltshire and suggests that possibly "Liddiard" is meant. Tyerman, L., The Life of George Whitefield, Vol. I, page 1.

²Gillies, J., Memoirs of the Life of the Reverend George Whitefield, M. A., Chapter I.

³Whitefield, G., "A Short Account of God's Dealings with the Reverend Mr. George Whitefield, A.B., late of Pembroke College, Oxford, from his Infancy to the Time of His Entering Holy Orders," page 8, printed in 1740; hereafter this work will be referred to as "Short Account."

responsibility of supporting herself and seven children, the profits from the inn being her only income. Mrs. Whitefield remained a widow for eight years after her husband's death; but in 1724, when George was ten years of age, she married a Mr. Longden, an ironmonger in Gloucester.⁴

George's conduct as a child was not exemplary. In his "Short Account" he confesses to the whole gamut of juvenile sins: lying, cursing, stealing, misbehaving at public worship, and playing wild, roguish tricks. Frequently he took money from his mother's pockets while she was sleeping; he used this money to buy himself fruits and tarts, but sometimes shared it with the poor. He admits stealing books from friends and recalls that some of these stolen volumes were books of devotions.⁵ The account shows that Whitefield's childhood, though less than ideal, was not extremely abnormal, and when it is realized that he was without the benefit of a father's discipline and that his mother was occupied in the conduct of the inn, it is not surprising that he wandered into these naughty practices.

George was first enrolled as a student in the King's School, a small institution conducted under the supervision of Gloucester Cathedral.⁶ At the age of twelve, he entered the Gloucester Free Grammar School.⁷ Because of his excellent memory and his gift of elocution, he was frequently chosen to make speeches before the school trustees who had a habit of visiting the school at least once a year. Young Whitefield thoroughly enjoyed these opportunities to

⁴Gillies, J., Op. Cit., Chapter I

⁵Whitefield, G., "Short Account", page 11. (Augustine goes through a catalogue of similar faults in his Confessions.)

⁶Belden, A.D., George Whitefield - The Awakener, page 12. This fact was ascertained by Mr. Roland Austin, Chief Librarian of Gloucester.

⁷Whitefield, G., Op. Cit., page 12

speak as they provided an outlet for his oratorical and dramatic talents and served to develop them.

Before George was fifteen, he went to his mother asking permission to drop the study of Latin. He reasoned that since she could not afford to give him a university education, more classical education was unnecessary and would tend to spoil him as a tradesman. At first his mother refused, but later consented. Soon after this, Mrs. Whitefield's financial circumstances became critical, and as a result, George withdrew from school to assist her at the inn.

Although George was faithful and thorough in the discharge of his duties, he experienced many leisure hours, usually in solitude. The Bible became his companion, and he frequently read it late into the night; he even composed two or three sermons and dedicated one to his eldest brother. This pattern of life lasted only a year; Mrs. Whitefield decided to move from the inn and to convey her title to the property to her married son who had been taught the business.⁸ It was agreed that George would remain at the inn and assist his brother, but this arrangement was terminated in less than six months because of recurring disagreements between George and his sister-in-law.

Upon leaving the inn, George went to Bristol where he visited his eldest brother. When he returned to Gloucester, he accepted his mother's hospitality, meager though it was, rather than return to the inn under the scornful eye of his sister-in-law.

Much to his surprise, George learned that it was possible to work one's way through Oxford and that one of his former school-mates was actually doing this as a servitor at Pembroke College. George decided to attempt to do likewise, and soon re-entered school to pursue classical studies and thus prepare

⁸No reason for her withdrawal from the inn is given by Whitefield or by any of his biographers.

himself for Oxford. He applied himself diligently and learned rapidly.

During these months preparatory to entering Oxford, Whitefield exhibited an intense interest in religion. He attended public worship regularly, received the Sacrament monthly, had private devotions twice a day, and fasted frequently. He was careful to observe the special seasons of the church, and earnestly strove to bring his thoughts, words, and acts into subjection to Christ. One of his brothers remarked that such seriousness would probably not endure long at Oxford!⁹

Whitefield entered Pembroke College, Oxford, shortly before his eighteenth birthday in 1732. A friend lent him ten pounds with which to pay his entrance fees. Much to Whitefield's surprise and delight, the college master immediately appointed him a servitor. His experience of working at the inn at Gloucester had ideally prepared him for this position, and as a consequence his services were in great demand. Except for twenty-four pounds provided by relatives and some small presents from his tutor, he was able to discharge his total expenses for three years by his labors in this work.¹⁰

Christianity was at a very low ebb at Oxford when Whitefield enrolled there as a student. Parliament had passed the Act of Uniformity on May 19, 1662, and soon thereafter, on St. Bartholomew's Day, twelve hundred clergymen left their churches and eight hundred others followed them later. Thus a total of two thousand ministers who had desired reform in the Church's principles and practices vacated their churches and positions of leadership, leaving the Church of England to those ministers who were content with things as they were. Within

⁹Whitefield, G., Op. Cit., pages 18 through 21.

¹⁰Ibid., page 24.

the University, formalism and ritualism seem to have been reckoned of more importance than talents, learning, and piety. The spirit of infidelity was prevalent; even the defences of Christianity, which issued from the University press during that age, reveal the fact that they were as much wanted for the gownsmen, as for the public. The Rev. Robert Philip suggests that from 1662 until Whitefield entered Pembroke College, the motto of the University might well have been, "We care less for character than for conformity."¹¹

Contrary to his brother's prediction, Whitefield was not distracted from his religious exercises at Oxford; instead, he devoted himself even more seriously to them. In the privacy of his room he studiously read Law's Serious Call To A Devout Life, as well as his Christian Perfection, and was inspired by both.

Meanwhile, Whitefield's attention was drawn to a small band of students which met frequently for the purpose of nurturing the Christian faith of its members. This little band was first referred to by the students outside its fellowship as "The Holy Club," for when its members assembled it was for the purpose of reading the Bible, praying, sharing religious experiences, and encouraging one another in Christian service. The first members of the club were John Wesley and his brother, Charles, William Morgan, commoner of Christ Church, and a young man by the name of Kirkham of Merton College. Regularity in religious exercises and faithfulness in living by rule or method soon became characteristic of their conduct; consequently, they were dubbed "Methodists." This term was applied by an Oxford graduate versed in classic lore who recalled that there was a school of medicine, flourishing in Rome in

¹¹Philip, R., The Life and Times of the Reverend George Whitefield, M. A., page 13.

the days of Nero, which was renowned for the strict rule of life it required of its patients who were called "Methodists."¹²

Whitefield was deeply impressed by the Methodists, and for twelve months secretly yearned to have fellowship with them.¹³ When he saw them go through ridiculing crowds to receive the Sacrament at St. Mary's Church, he felt that he should follow their example, and when slanderous things were spoken of them, he rose to their defense. His desire to become acquainted with the Methodists was ultimately fulfilled. This occurred when a disheartened, poverty stricken woman attempted suicide; Whitefield being without funds with which to aid her, but knowing of the Wesleys' desire to do good works, sent an aged apple-woman to acquaint Charles Wesley with the case. Contrary to Whitefield's expressed desire, the woman told Wesley who had sent her. Subsequently, Wesley asked Whitefield to join him for breakfast, and during this meeting, Wesley gave him Professor August Hermann Francke's Treatise Against The Fear of Man, and also The Country Parson's Advice To His Parishioners.¹⁴ Forty years afterwards, Charles commemorated this meeting as follows:

Can I the memorable day forget,
When first we by Divine appointment met?
Where undisturbed the thoughtful student roves,
In search of truth, through academic groves;
A modest, pensive youth, who mused alone,
Industrious the frequented path to shun,
An Israelite, without disguise or art,
I saw, I loved, and clasped him to my heart,
A stranger as my bosom friend caressed,
And unawares received an angel-guest.¹⁵

¹²Belden, A. D., Op. Cit., page 18.

¹³Whitefield, G., "Short Account," page 26.

¹⁴Ibid., page 27.

¹⁵Gledstone, J. P., George Whitefield, M. A., Field-Preacher, page 13.

Shortly after the first meeting, Wesley gave Whitefield another book entitled, The Life of God in the Soul of Man, by the Rev. Henry Scougal, M. A., the teachings of which broke upon Whitefield's soul like a great blaze of light. Notice his reaction:

. . . though I had fasted, watched, and prayed, and received the Sacrament so long, yet I never knew what true religion was, till God sent me that excellent treatise by the hands of a never to be forgotten friend.

At my first reading it, I wondered what the author meant by saying, 'That some falsely placed religion in going to Church, doing hurt to no one, being constant in the duties of the closet, and now and then reaching out their hands to give alms to their poor neighbours.' . . . Alas! thought I, 'If this be not religion, what is?' God soon shewed me. For in reading a few lines further, that 'true religion was an union of the soul with God, and Christ formed within us;' a ray of divine light was instantaneously darted in upon my soul, and from that moment, but not till then, did I know that I must be a new creature.¹⁶

Whitefield was gradually introduced to the other Methodists, and he began to live by rule as they. He cherished each fragment of his time, each moment, as though they were days. Every morning and every evening he retired for an hour in private prayer; this he found difficult at first, but later it proved profitable and delightful. He fasted on Wednesdays and Fridays, tasting no food whatever until three o'clock in the afternoon, and he received the Sacrament every Sunday at Christ Church. He soon made it a rule to spend one hour each day in charitable work such as visiting the sick, the prisoners, the inmates of the parish workhouse, and reading to the poor.¹⁷ He became dissatisfied with reading books of science and literature, and determined

¹⁶Whitefield, G., Op. Cit., pages 27 and 28.

¹⁷Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. I, pages 27 and 28.

that he would read only religious books which dealt directly with the Christian faith.¹⁸

Having demonstrated his faithfulness to the Methodist pattern of life, Whitefield was received as a member of the group late in 1734 or early in 1735. He was happy in the fellowship of the Methodists, but his open affiliation with them caused Whitefield to lose many of his former friends.

First of all he lost the good will and companionship of his fellow students. As soon as he received the Sacrament on a week-day at St. Mary's, he became an object of disdain, for by this act everyone knew that he had embraced the fellowship and practices of the Methodists. Some of the students to whom he was attached as servitor gradually withdrew pay from him; a few even pelted him with dirt. He had chosen, as he himself said, "rather to bear contempt with those people of God, than to enjoy the applause of almost Christians for a season."¹⁹

He also incurred the disfavor of the master of his college, for when news came to the master's ears that he was visiting regularly among the poor, he summoned Whitefield and threatened to expel him if he continued this practice. Being overawed and even surprised by the master's ultimatum, Whitefield agreed to refrain from making such visits, but almost immediately repented of his hasty agreement and visited the poor at his first opportunity.²⁰

Even Whitefield's relatives in Gloucester and elsewhere conceived strong prejudices against him. When he needed love and guidance most, these

¹⁸Whitefield, G., Op. Cit., page 30

¹⁹Ibid., page 33.

²⁰Ibid., page 34.

comforts were denied him even by his family. Fortunately he had a kind and thoughtful tutor who in many respects was like a father to him; this good man gave Whitefield a sympathetic hearing, lent him books, visited him, and even provided a physician when necessary.²¹

During the early months of fellowship with the Methodists (January through June of 1735), Whitefield experienced the major spiritual upheaval of his life. At this time he passed through a veritable maze of trials and temptations, and ultimately emerged spiritually triumphant but physically exhausted.

The first manifestation of his spiritual trials was a definite yearning, "a particular hungering and thirsting," as Whitefield described it, after the humility of Christ. Night and day he prayed that he might be granted the grace of humility, but these prayers were not answered. The comfort of normal devotions was lost, and he was seized by a horrible fearfulness and dread. He sought the advice of his friend Charles Wesley who referred him to a chapter of Thomas a Kempis and urged him to resume his devotional habits.²²

Soon after this, he felt that he should exercise a more rigid discipline over his body, that he should know more of self-denial. He stopped eating fruits and sweets, and gave the money he had been spending for these to the poor. He chose the worse sort of food, wore woolen gloves, a patched gown, and dirty shoes.

Much of Whitefield's difficulty during this period was caused by the fact that when he encountered and adopted worthy ideas, he drove them to

²¹Ibid., page 35.

²²Ibid., page 36.

extremes. Castaniza, in his Spiritual Combat, advised to talk little, but Whitefield did not talk at all, and sat whole evenings among his companions without speaking a word. He remained in his study most of the time during a five or six week period in order that he might battle with his corrupt nature. He felt a heavy pressure upon his body and an unspeakable oppression of mind, yet he offered up his "soul to God to do with as he pleased."²³ Twice he went into Christ Church Walk after supper and silently prayed under a tree until the bell called him to retirement at the college.

Whitefield's ability to prepare his class assignments was of course seriously impaired by his preoccupation with these religious exercises. When he endeavored to compose a theme, he found that he could not write a word. For two Saturdays in succession he did not have a theme to present and was fined by his tutor for not having his work prepared.

Whitefield was then tempted to abstain from associating with his religious friends, for he wrote:

By this time I had left off keeping a diary, using my forms, or scarce my voice in prayer, visiting the prisoners, etc. Nothing remained for me to leave, unless I forsook public worship, but my religious friends. Now it was suggested that I must leave them also for Christ's sake.²⁴

He promptly followed this suggestion, but fortunately his withdrawal from the Methodist group quickly aroused the suspicion of Charles Wesley who went to Whitefield's room and learned the cause of his absence. Charles was sympathetic with Whitefield, but strongly advised that he accept the counsel of someone

²³Ibid., page 42.

²⁴Ibid., page 43.

more experienced in the Christian life. John Wesley, fellow of Lincoln College, was the person agreed upon to visit Whitefield and render him all possible assistance. John, in his visit with Whitefield, advised that he return to the regular exercise of all externals: devotional periods, fasts, etc., as well as good works.²⁵ Whitefield humbly accepted this advice and acted in accordance with it. He read Thomas a Kempis, Castaniza's Spiritual Combat, and the Greek New Testament, and found some comfort and encouragement in them. He rejoiced in being of assistance to a poor woman whose husband was confined in the Oxford jail, and was instrumental in the conversion of both husband and wife.²⁶

The Lenten season soon came, and as usual the Methodists observed it strictly, eating no meat for five weeks except on Saturdays and Sundays. Whitefield, spurred on by his zeal and enthusiasm, outstripped his fellow Methodists in self-denial. He ate meat only on Sunday, and from Monday through Saturday ate only coarse bread and drank sage tea without sugar. He walked out in the cold so frequently in the mornings and for such long periods that a part of one hand turned black. The abuse of his body along with his spiritual conflicts and yearnings left him so depleted that when Passion Week came he could scarcely creep up the stairway. He sent word of his condition to his tutor who immediately provided him with medical aid. He was confined to his room for seven weeks under the care of a physician. During this time, weak though he was, he spent two hours every evening in devotions and prayed over his Greek Testament and Bishop Hall's Contemplations every hour that his

²⁵Ibid., page 44.

²⁶Ibid., page 46.

health would permit.

Whitefield's time of deliverance from his long night of spiritual conflict and trials had arrived. The following paragraph is his own account of how that deliverance occurred:

About the end of the seven weeks, and after I had been groaning under an unspeakable pressure both of body and mind for about a twelvemonth; God was pleased to set me free in the following manner. --One day, perceiving an uncommon drought, and a disagreeable clamminess in my mouth, and using things to allay my thirst, but in vain, it was suggested to me, that when Jesus Christ cried out, 'I thirst,' his sufferings were near at an end. Upon which, I cast myself down on the bed, crying out, I thirst! I thirst! --Soon after this, I found and felt in myself that I was delivered from the burden that had so heavily oppressed me! The spirit of mourning was taken from me, and I knew what it was truly to rejoice in God my Saviour, and for some time, could not avoid singing Psalms wherever I was; but my joy gradually became more settled, and blessed be God, has abode and increased in my soul (saving a few casual intermissions) ever since!²⁷

The above paragraph was printed in Whitefield's "Short Account," first published in 1740; when Whitefield revised, corrected, and abridged the "Short Account" in 1756, he substituted the following paragraph for the one quoted above:

About the end of the seventh week, after having undergone innumerable buffetings of Satan and many months' inexpressible trials by night and day under the spirit of bondage, God was pleased at length to remove the heavy load, to enable me to lay hold on His dear Son by a living faith, and by giving me the spirit of adoption, to seal me, as I humbly hope, even to the day of everlasting redemption.

But oh, with what joy, joy unspeakable, even joy that was full of, and big with, glory, was my soul filled when the weight of sin went off, and an abiding sense of the pardoning love of God and a full assurance of faith broke in upon my disconsolate soul! Surely it was the day of my espousals, a day to be had in everlasting remembrance. At

²⁷Ibid., pages 48 and 49.

first my joys were like a spring-tide, and, as it were, overflowed the banks. Go where I would, I could not avoid singing Psalms almost aloud; afterwards it became more settled, and blessed be God! saving a few casual intervals, has abode and increased in my soul ever since.²⁸

It was near the middle of 1735 when Whitefield experienced this joyous release from the agony which his soul had endured for months. At last the long night of his mourning had ended, and the spirit of God took possession of his soul assuring him of his salvation and granting him infinite peace. Whitefield and his Methodist friends had aimed at subduing their "corrupt passions" and laying hold of the virtues of "meekness, lowliness, faith, hope, and love of God and man." The means to these goals, they thought, were public and private worship, "acts of self-denial and mortification," and the practice of good works.²⁹ No one could question Whitefield's perseverance or doubt his earnestness and sincerity. He had tried to save himself by his good works and ascetic practices, and these had nearly killed him; he had tried quietism and had almost lost his mind in the process. Now at last he had found that the one and only way to salvation was by simple faith in Christ, and he was jubilant in his discovery. Henceforth, Whitefield is no more a morose ascetic trying to establish his own righteousness, but a triumphant believer in the righteousness of Christ, and a man joyous in the assurance of being an adopted son of God.

Whitefield had exhausted the by-paths to salvation upon which the Wesleys had set him, and had under God discovered the true path of faith in Christ. Three years passed after Whitefield's experience before John and Charles Wesley came into the full knowledge and joy of this truth, fundamental

²⁸Whitefield, G., Whitefield's Journals to Which Is Prefixed His "Short Account" and "Further Account," edited by William Wale, page 48.

²⁹Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. I, page 32.

to the Christian gospel. Doubtless Whitefield would have led the Wesleys into a full appreciation of justification by faith had he remained at Oxford, but his physician insisted that he leave the University for a period of rest. He therefore went to Gloucester the early part of July, 1735, and when he returned to Oxford in March, 1736, the Wesleys had sailed for Georgia, and a long space of time elapsed before the three friends were reunited.³⁰

It was a vain hope that the Oxford physician entertained when he sent Whitefield away thinking that he would be diverted from his intense spiritual pursuits in his native Gloucester. He continued in his good works and in his devotions, but he no longer looked upon these as duties but as delightful privileges. His appearance and demeanor had also changed, for he wrote in his diary: "Having now obtained mercy from God, and received the Spirit of adoption in my heart, my friends were surprised to see me look and behave so cheerfully, after the many reports they had heard concerning me."³¹ Whitefield missed the fellowship of the Oxford Methodists, and resolved either to find or make at least one spiritually minded friend. This decision resulted in the formation of a small society of young people who began to inquire seriously into the Christian way of life. In private, Whitefield concentrated on Bible reading, laying aside all other books, and praying over, if possible, every line and word; "this," he wrote, "proved meat indeed, and drink indeed, to my soul. I daily received fresh life, light, and power from above."³² He read to poor people two or three times a week; he visited societies other than his own; he counseled with people who sought advice and called on the sick. A friend at

³⁰Ibid., page 35.

³¹Whitefield, G., "Short Account," page 50.

³²Ibid., page 52.

Oxford wrote asking him to visit a man named Peabworth who escaped from the Oxford jail and had been retaken in Gloucester. Whitefield made the visit and found the man and several other prisoners willing to hear the Word of God. He read to them daily, begged money on their behalf, and arranged for some to be released. He provided for food to be distributed to them for some weeks and furnished them with devotional literature. Thus, he was employed in "every good word and work" for a period of nine months in Gloucester.

Whitefield returned to Oxford in March, 1736, where he re-entered as a student and a servitor in Pembroke College. His reunion with his Methodist friends was indeed a happy one, and in a short time he was appointed to serve as successor to the Wesleys in the leadership of the group.

The next event of outstanding significance in Whitefield's life was his entering into Holy Orders. He was not anxious to take quickly upon himself the ministerial office, due largely to the fact that he stood in awe and felt a real dread of its tremendous responsibilities. He constantly bore in mind the saying of the Apostle, "Not a novice, lest being puffed up with pride, ye fall into condemnation of the Devil." He trembled at the thought of the first question of the ordination service: "Do you trust that you are inwardly moved by the Holy Ghost to take upon you this office and administration?" He feared lest he enter the ministerial office before he was called of God.

There was also a technical obstacle that stood in the way of his ordination. Bishop Benson had made it a rule not to ordain any men under twenty-three years of age to the sacred office. During the time Whitefield was in Gloucester under doctor's orders, one of the vergers of the Cathedral told Whitefield that the Bishop desired to speak with him. In the conversation that followed, the Bishop said: "Notwithstanding I have declared I would not ordain any under

three and twenty, yet I shall think it my duty to ordain you whenever you come for Holy Orders."³³ Whitefield interpreted the Bishop's offer as the call for which he had been waiting; consequently, he asked that a date for his ordination be set, and June 20, 1736, was agreed upon.

When the date appointed for his ordination arrived, Whitefield, at the age of twenty-one, stood before Bishop Benson in the imposing Cathedral of Gloucester and was admitted into Holy Orders. His mother and other relatives were doubtless present. Robert Raikes, the manager and printer of the Gloucester Journal, and the reputed founder of Sunday schools, was one of Whitefield's warm admirers and was probably present to witness the service. At any rate, it was a solemn hour for the young candidate, and one for which he had made careful preparation in fasting, prayer, and Scripture reading.³⁴

On the day of his ordination, Whitefield wrote the following letter to a friend:

This is a day much to be remembered; for, about noon, I was solemnly admitted by good Bishop Benson, before many witnesses, into holy orders. I endeavoured to behave with unaffected devotion. I trust I answered every question from the bottom of my heart. I hope the good of souls will be my only principle of action . . . Whether I myself shall ever have the honour of styling myself a prisoner of the Lord, I know not; but indeed, my dear friend, I can call heaven and earth to witness that, when the bishop laid his hand upon me, I gave myself up to be a martyr for Him, who hung upon the cross for me. Known unto Him are all future contingencies. I have thrown myself blindfold, and I trust without reserve, into His almighty hands.³⁵

³³Ibid., page 63.

³⁴Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. I, page 47.

³⁵Whitefield, G., The Works of the Reverend George Whitefield, Containing Sermons and Tracts and Collected Letters, Volume I, page 15.

There is one sentence in this letter which we might well underscore: "I hope the good of souls will be my only principle of action." These were not idle words written in an exalted hour of dedication and soon forgotten. On the contrary, these words set forth the single motive of Whitefield's life from that day until his death September 30, 1770.

On the Sunday after his ordination, that is, on June 27, 1736, Whitefield preached his first sermon and used as his subject, "The Necessity and Benefit of Religious Society."³⁶ He delivered the sermon before a crowded congregation in St. Mary de Crypt, the church in Gloucester where he was baptized as an infant and where he received his first communion. A few hours before he preached, he said to one of his friends, "I must tell them the truth, or I shall not be a faithful minister of Christ."³⁷ Thus from the beginning of his preaching career, Whitefield felt it necessary to be uncompromising with the truth as he understood it. Not long before his death, he recalled a part of this first sermon when he said:

I remember when I began to speak against baptismal regeneration--in my first sermon, printed when I was about twenty-two years old, or a little more--the first quarrel many had with me was because I did not say that all people who were baptized were born again. I would as soon believe the doctrine of transubstantiation. Can I believe that a person, who, from the time of his baptism to the time perhaps, of his death, never fights against the world, the flesh, and the devil, and never minds one word of what his god-fathers and god-mothers promised for him, is a real Christian? No, I can as soon believe that a little wafer in the hands of a priest is the very blood and bones of Jesus Christ.³⁸

³⁶Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. I, page 51.

³⁷Ibid., Vol. I, page 52.

³⁸Whitefield, G., Eighteen Sermons, (1809), page 351.

Tyerman gives the following description of Whitefield at the time of his ordination and first sermon:

His stature above the middle height--slender, yet well proportioned; his manner graceful; his features regular; his complexion fair; his eyes small, lively, and of a dark blue colour, one of them with a squint, occasioned by the measles in his childhood days; his voice unusual, both in melody and strength, and its fine modulations accompanied by the exquisite action of an accomplished orator.³⁹

Whitefield was strongly encouraged by friends to take up work at Gloucester, but he was needed to direct the activities of the Methodists at Oxford, just as he had been doing for the past several months. Feeling that his opportunities for accomplishing good were greater at Oxford, he decided to continue in the work there.

He returned to Oxford on June 30, and within a few weeks took the degree of Bachelor of Arts. The supervision of the Methodist activities, along with his personal study and devotions filled his days, and he was happy pursuing a busy but unhurried life. After being at Oxford for a month, he was asked by the Rev. Thomas Broughton, then curate of the Tower of London, to officiate there in his absence which had become necessary by a call to temporary service in Hampshire. Whitefield complied with the request and, with fear and trembling, took a stage coach for London. His first sermon there was delivered in Bishopsgate Church on August 8. He remained in London two months fulfilling the duties of minister in the Tower. The chapel was crowded every Sunday; numbers of his religious friends, as well as strangers from various parts of the city, came to hear him preach on subjects relating to the "new birth and the necessity of renouncing all in affection, in order to follow Jesus Christ."⁴⁰

³⁹Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. I, page 51.

⁴⁰Whitefield, G., "Further Account of God's Dealings with Mr. George Whitefield," page 7. Hereafter referred to as, "Further Account."

While in London, Whitefield received letters from the Wesley brothers and from Ingham, their fellow worker in Georgia. His soul was stirred by the experiences they related, and he longed to go abroad and join his friends in their work. Yet he had no outward call to Georgia, for the Wesleys had not directly invited him to come and take up work with them. At length, Broughton returned to the Tower and Whitefield retired to his charge at Oxford.

Whitefield again found life at Oxford very pleasant and rejoiced in daily communion with God and in the fellowship of several young men of sincere devotion. He privately studied the Scriptures using Matthew Henry's Commentaries, and every day his young friends met with him for religious conversation and mutual encouragement. A gentleman in London sent Whitefield money to be used among the poor and also sufficient funds for him to discharge debts incurred in buying books. Lady Betty Hastings, sister of the Earl of Huntingdon, also assisted Whitefield and his Methodist friends; this was the beginning of a friendship between Whitefield and Lady Hastings' family that proved a mutual delight for many years to come.⁴¹

Again Whitefield was called from the seclusion and peace of Oxford. The Reverend Charles Kinchin, a fellow Methodist and minister of the Dummer Church in Hampshire, was being considered for the office of dean of Corpus Christi College. He desired leave from his charge to go to Oxford until a decision was made as to his future work and asked Whitefield to take the responsibility of the Dummer Church, stating that he in turn would be happy to assume the responsibility for Whitefield's work at Oxford. This exchange was effected, and Whitefield began serving the Dummer Church where he soon discovered that its congregation consisted "chiefly of poor illiterate people." He began, however,

⁴¹Ibid., page 9.

"to be as much delighted with their artless conversation as he had been formerly with Oxford friends, and frequently learned as much by one afternoon's visit as a week's study."⁴²

About the middle of December Whitefield received word that Charles Wesley had arrived in London from Georgia, and soon afterward had a letter from Wesley stating that he had come to England to interest Christian ministers in taking up work in Georgia, and added, "I dare not prevent God's nomination." A few days later, he received a letter from John Wesley, then in Georgia, saying:

Only Mr. Delamott is with me, till God shall stir up the hearts of some of his servants, who putting their lives in his hands, shall come over and help us, where the harvest is so great, and the labourers so few. What if thou art the man, Mr. Whitefield? ⁴³

These words aimed at the heart of Whitefield found their target. He had not been able to free himself of the idea of going to Georgia since he first received letters from the Wesleys describing the opportunities for spiritual work there. Now he felt that the call for which he had been waiting had been given; moreover, the way was open for him to leave England since Mr. Kinchin had become dean of Corpus Christi and Mr. Hervey was ready to serve the Dummer Church. Other considerations were equally favorable; so at length he resolved to go to Georgia and wrote his relatives of his decision.⁴⁴

The eighteen months between the beginning of July, 1735, and the end of December, 1736, were eventful ones in Whitefield's life. Under his physician's orders he had left Oxford and spent nine months in Gloucester. There he formed

⁴²Ibid., page 10.

⁴³Ibid., page 11.

⁴⁴Ibid., page 12.

a religious society, visited prisoners in jail, read numerous religious books, and spent much time in private devotions. There had been no prospect of his being admitted to Holy Orders because of Bishop Benson's declaration that he would not ordain any person under twenty-three years of age. Moreover, he shrank from immediate ordination, and even prayed against it when his friends suggested that he should be ordained without delay. In March he returned to Oxford and was made Wesley's successor in the Methodist work there. On June 20, he was ordained by Bishop Benson. He received the degree of Bachelor of Arts from Oxford in July. He was preaching with marked success in London churches in August and September. He served as supply pastor of the small Dummer Church in November. He received letters from the Wesleys encouraging him to cast his lot with them in Georgia, and by the end of December he had definitely resolved to go to Georgia and to serve as a missionary there. Thus at the end of the year 1736 Whitefield, then twenty-two years of age, was ready and eager to embark for his new field of labor.⁴⁵

On New Year's Day, 1737, Whitefield went to Gloucester. While he was there, Bishop Benson gave him his blessings in the decision to labor in Georgia. Whitefield took leave of his mother and other members of his family, and then proceeded to Bristol to bid farewell to other relatives. He preached several times in Bristol; each time interest and enthusiasm mounted until St. John's Church could not accommodate the crowd, and people of all denominations were turned away. "The doctrine of justification by faith in Jesus Christ made its way like lightening into the hearers' conscience. The arrows of conviction stuck fast; . . ."⁴⁶

⁴⁵Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. I, page 61.

⁴⁶Whitefield, G., "Further Account," page 13.

Whitefield's passage to Georgia had been arranged on General James Oglethorpe's ship which was scheduled to sail as soon as the General completed business affairs in England. Instead of embarking during the early part of 1737 as anticipated, General Oglethorpe was detained in England the entire year. Rather impatiently, therefore, Whitefield spent the year in England awaiting the time of embarkation.

Despite the irritation of circumstances which kept Whitefield in England, the year 1737 proved to be an important one in his life and ministry. He was an episcopally ordained evangelist in the Church of England, free from the responsibilities of a local parish, and eager to preach on every occasion that arose. As a Christian of uncommon zeal, fervor and abounding energy, as well as a preacher blessed with personal magnetism and charm, he was extremely attractive, and the interest of multitudes focused upon him as he preached during the year in Bristol, Gloucester, London, and other places. His appearance, voice, and eloquence drew thousands about him who at first cared little for his doctrine; they soon became more concerned, however, with what he said than with the way he said it. His popularity mounted every passing week; thus he occupied a precarious position for a young man of twenty-two, for popular acclaim might easily have ruined him. By capturing the attention and interest of the people in 1737, Whitefield, unknowingly, prepared the way for John Wesley's preaching in 1739.⁴⁷

In February, Whitefield was in Oxford; in early March, he went to London and was cordially received by General Oglethorpe and the Trustees of Georgia. Oglethorpe introduced him to the Archbishop of Canterbury, and he also met the

⁴⁷Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. I, pages 64 and 65.

Reverend Arthur Bedford who in turn presented him to the Lord Bishop of London. Whitefield remained in London for three weeks preaching more frequently and to larger crowds than when there before. He learned from General Oglethorpe that he would not embark for Georgia for at least several weeks.

Being under obligation to the Reverend Sampson Harris, minister of Stonehouse in Gloucestershire, Whitefield went there to supply while Harris attended to some affairs in London. Whitefield wrote that, all things considered, he did not think that he had ever been more blessed than during his stay at Stonehouse.⁴⁸

On May 23, he journeyed to Bristol where people on foot and in coaches came a mile outside the city to meet him and many congregated on the streets to welcome him. He received letters in Bristol bearing the news that Oglethorpe would not embark for another two months; this came as a disappointment to him but as welcome tidings to the people. He began preaching five times a week, and the crowds grew larger and larger.

He paid a brief visit to Bath, returned to Bristol, bade farewell to his friends there, and then journeyed to Gloucester for a few days' visit. A general rendezvous of the Methodists had been planned at Oxford; so Whitefield joined them and rejoiced in the flourishing interest of the group. About the end of August, he was in London anxiously awaiting sailing time, but Oglethorpe's departure was still delayed. Whitefield felt that he should embark on the first ship sailing to America but was urged to wait until the departure of a ship which was to carry soldiers directly to Georgia. He agreed to this

⁴⁸Whitefield, G., "Further Account," page 16.

and, having taken final leave of family and friends, decided to remain in London and give himself to prayer, study, and preaching.

He preached in Cripplegate, St. Ann's, Forster Lane, Wapping Chapel, the Tower, Ludgate, Newgate, and in many other churches where lectures were delivered on week-days. The congregations continued to increase, and on Sundays he generally preached four times to very large assemblies.

At the urging of friends, Whitefield consented to the printing of his sermon on "The Nature and Necessity of our Regeneration or New Birth in Christ Jesus," which under God began a revival of interest in Christianity in London, Bristol, Gloucester, and Gloucestershire.

His name first appeared in the newspapers about the middle of September in connection with the large offerings that were received at his meetings. This reference naturally embarrassed Whitefield, for although the offerings had been considerable, they were solely for the charity schools of England and for the poor of Georgia. This publicity did, however, increase public interest and people crowded all the more to hear him at the various churches. Constables had to be employed to keep the crowds in order. Whitefield wrote in his "Further Account" the following brief comment on the phenomenal response to his preaching:

One might, as it were, walk upon the people's heads, and thousands went away from the largest churches for want of room. They were all attention when the Word was delivered, and heard like people hearing for eternity. ⁴⁹

As his popularity increased, so did opposition. At first many ministers were among his hearers and supporters, but they began to complain that their churches were being abused by the large crowds and that parishioners were

⁴⁹Ibid., pages 21 and 22.

frequently crowded out of their own churches. Some called him a spiritual pick-pocket, and the rumor spread that the Bishop of London intended to silence him on account of the many complaints made by the clergy. Whitefield arranged an interview with the Bishop of London and was gratified to learn that the Bishop intended neither to silence him nor to register objection to the doctrine he preached.⁵⁰

As Christmas drew near, notice was given that the soldiers were almost ready to embark for Georgia. On Wednesday evening, December 28, 1737, Whitefield left London accompanied by four of his faithful friends and arrived at Deptford at ten o'clock to board the "Whitaker." It was not, however, until five weeks after this that Whitefield sailed from the English coast for Georgia; sundry delays including poor sailing weather kept the "Whitaker" in England during this time.

⁵⁰Ibid., page 24.

CHAPTER II

A STUDY OF COLONIAL AMERICA FROM 1700 TO 1738

In order to understand and appreciate the American phase of Whitefield's work, it is necessary to bring into focus something of the historical background against which he worked. The purpose, therefore, of this present study, brief though it is, is to set forth the governmental, economic, social, and religious nature as well as the westward expansion of colonial America from 1700 to 1738, the years immediately preceding Whitefield's first visit to America. The founding of Georgia in 1732, being of particular significance to the American phase of Whitefield's ministry, commands special attention.

The Colonies And Their Government

By the beginning of the eighteenth century or, to be more exact, by 1704, the following twelve colonies had been established in America: Virginia, Massachusetts, Connecticut, Rhode Island, New Hampshire, Maryland, North Carolina, South Carolina, New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, and Delaware. Almost a hundred years had elapsed during the establishment of these colonies; for the first, Virginia, was founded in 1607, and Delaware, the last of the twelve, in 1704. Each of these colonies belonged to one of the three following types: charter colonies, proprietary colonies, and royal or provincial colonies.

Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island were the charter colonies. In these colonies the charter, granted by the king, constituted the written fundamental law under which the government was organized and from which officers received their authority.

Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, North Carolina, and South Carolina were the proprietary colonies. These colonies were governed directly by proprietors under a charter granted by the king. The charter for these colonies not only set forth the prerogatives of the proprietors but also granted certain rights and privileges to the people.

New Hampshire, New York, New Jersey, and Virginia were royal or provincial colonies. These colonies were under the direct control of the king, there being no charter standing between king and colony. The king allowed the royal colonies to have substantially the same form of government enjoyed by the other colonies, so that the royal colonies differed little from the proprietary or charter colonies.

In every colony there were three governmental departments: the executive, the judicial, and the legislative. At the head of the executive department was the governor, whose office was the main channel of communication between the colony and the home government, and whose duty was to execute the laws of the colonial legislature, and particular acts of Parliament which were related to the colony. In Connecticut and Rhode Island the governor was elected by the people: in the other colonies he was appointed either by the proprietor or by the crown. In most of the colonies, his salary was paid out of an appropriation made by the colonial assembly.

A judicial system was established in all the colonies. The chief judges in the system were appointed by the king, either directly or through the governor except in Connecticut and Rhode Island, where the judicial officers were appointed by the colonial legislature. All appeals from the decisions of colonial judges were taken to the English Privy Council which sometimes set

aside a colonial law on the ground that it was in conflict with the laws of England.

The legislative branch in most of the colonies consisted of a lower house elected by the voters and of a small upper house appointed by the governor. The lower house had full control in respect to the raising and spending of money and this power had the effect of making the lower branch of the legislature the supreme ruling force in the colony.

The powers exercised by the colonial governments were quite similar to those exercised by the various states in the United States today. It was a recognized principle that the colonies might legislate for themselves as they pleased, provided their laws were consistent with allegiance to the crown and were not contrary to those acts of Parliament wherein the colonies were expressly mentioned. In most matters each colony was a self-governing community left to manage its own affairs in its own way.¹

The Economic Life of The Colonies

The Indians, The Fur Trade, And The Fisheries

Although the Indians were found everywhere in America, there were probably not more than between three hundred thousand and five hundred thousand in the entire territory of what is now the United States, and they were divided into more than three hundred tribes. In the South these tribes were quite small, frequently consisting of as few as ten to twenty wigwams. Among the larger tribes of the South were the Cherokees, the Chickasaws, Choctaws,

¹Forman, S. W., Advanced American History, pages 76-78.

Creeks, and Seminoles. In the North, the great Algonquin tribe controlled practically all the lands held by the red man.

The Indians were always eager to exchange the skins of fur-bearing animals for the trinkets, firearms, rum and brandy of the white men. The demand for furs in Europe was so great that by 1700 there had been built up an extremely profitable fur trade in almost every colony. Beaver skins were collected in New England by the tens of thousands; the fur trade was the chief business in New York and contributed greatly to the prosperity of Pennsylvania. Indeed from early colonial days until far into the nineteenth century furs held a conspicuous place in the economic life of America.²

Just as important as the fur-bearing animals were the fishes, especially the cod and mackerel that were found in great shoals along the coast from Newfoundland to Cape Hatteras. By 1700, Massachusetts alone had attracted hundreds of vessels and thousands of seamen to engage in the cod and whale fisheries. Large scale fishing for export was conducted exclusively in New England and this industry had become quite large and lucrative there.³

Agriculture

However profitable such business enterprises as the fur trade and the fisheries had become, the essential foundation of colonial economic life during the early decades of the eighteenth century was farming. Large tracts of land could be purchased from the Indians with rum or trinkets of little value. If the red man refused to part with lands that the white man wanted, the claims of the aboriginal possessor were brushed aside as being invalid for it was the

²Ibid., pages 57-59.

³Ibid., pages 59-60.

official theory that the king or his grantee held title to all land in the territory claimed by the English. The plentifulness and therefore the cheapness of land was the basic fact of economic life in America.

In the royal and proprietary provinces the land of the colonists was subject to a quit-rent paid to the grantor, either the king or the proprietor. The ordinary quit-rent amounted to only two shillings on a hundred acres a year; nevertheless, a tidy sum was collected annually by the king and the proprietors on their lands. In New England where there were no proprietors and where the king's title was virtually ignored, there were no quit-rents. The New Englanders looked to their colonial legislature as the giver of their lands; the allotments were usually made with a sparing hand with the result that New England became a section of small farms. The recipient of a grant became a real owner or freeholder whose land was subject to no rent of any kind. New York was a colony of large landholders; in Pennsylvania a liberal land policy was adopted wherein quit-rent was very low but the farms were, as a rule, small. In Virginia, where tobacco could be most profitably cultivated on a large scale, there were numerous plantations or estates consisting of from one thousand to fifty thousand acres. A land system for the Carolinas had developed slowly, but by 1700 the tendency was toward the small farm in North Carolina and toward the plantation in South Carolina.⁴

The colonists had found that the most valuable of the native crops were maize, or Indian corn, and tobacco. Corn had become the staff of life in the colonies and was cultivated everywhere except in the extreme northern part of New England. Its yield per acre was greater than any other grain; it was more

⁴Ibid., pages 61-62.

easily ground than wheat; it was fine food for horses, cattle, poultry, and hogs, and the husks and fodder provided forage for animals.

As early as 1612, John Rolfe (afterwards the husband of Pocahontas) succeeded in raising a crop of tobacco at Jamestown. This was a development of tremendous importance as tobacco became the first money crop to be exported from Virginia. After this, the colony rested upon a firm economic basis, and its future prosperity was assured. By 1700, tobacco had been established as the principal crop in Virginia and Maryland and an important one in North Carolina.

The culture of rice first began in America in 1694 when the governor of South Carolina successfully raised a small patch in his garden. It quickly became the great staple of the Carolinas and Georgia, being grown in the swamplands of this section. Indigo was also grown in the Carolinas and Georgia and was one of the chief items of export from these colonies.⁵

Slavery

The number of Negro slaves in any colony, except in those colonies where Quaker influence was predominant, was determined by economic conditions. In New England, for instance, the farms were small and the farmers poor, so that there was not a large slave population in this section. On the big estates along the Hudson and in the city of New York, slave labor had become quite popular. There were few slaves in Pennsylvania and New Jersey due to the Quaker dislike for slavery. The South was the section where slaves were most needed and therefore most numerous. The cultivation of the southern staples (tobacco, rice, and indigo) on a large scale required an enormous expenditure

⁵Chitwood, O. P., A History of Colonial America, pages 433, 439, 441.

of labor, far in excess of the physical strength of the white settlers alone. The colonists, moreover, were unaccustomed to agricultural pursuits, especially in the extreme heat of a southern summer at which time the crops were cultivated and gathered. For these reasons, Negro slaves were enthusiastically purchased in the South during the period 1700-1738.⁶

Merchants of all commercial nations had become profitably engaged in selling slaves to the colonists, but England soon took the lead, and in 1713 her role was strengthened by the Treaty of Utrecht which gave her seamen the exclusive right to sell slaves in the Spanish-American colonies. By 1700, American ships, mostly from New England, had begun active participation in the sale of slaves and had developed a lucrative traffic which continued far into the eighteenth century. They exported rum to the west coast of Africa where it was bartered for Negroes; these were taken to the West Indies and exchanged for molasses and other commodities; the molasses was taken to home ports in New England and converted into rum. Thus a three sided or "triangular" trade was developed.

Naturally all legal safeguards and restrictions placed upon slaves appear harsh and cruel to those of us in the twentieth century who have never witnessed such a system at work. In some colonies slaves were forbidden to leave the plantations of their masters without permission unless they were dressed in the livery of their owners. If a slave were assisted by a white man in an escape plot, both the slave and the freeman were put to death. In all the colonies runaway slaves were dealt with severely.

The slave had little legal protection against mistreatment by his master. In the Carolinas and in Virginia, if a master killed his slave in executing

⁶Ibid., pages 418-422.

legal punishment, the act was not regarded as a capital offense but as an accidental homicide, and therefore, unpunishable. The Negro's lot was hardest on the big rice and sugar plantations in South Carolina and the West Indies where the master-slave relationship was impersonal. Usually, however, where the master and slave were brought in close association, a mutual feeling of affection and loyalty developed.⁷

Despite its inherent evil, slavery brought tremendous economic and social benefits to the colonial planters. It was the cheapest labor system that could be devised, and it gave the employers complete control of their laborers. In addition to these benefits, slavery relieved the planter families from routine drudgery and gave them time to devote to intellectual and social pursuits.⁸

From the moral point of view, however, it is impossible to justify slavery's basic transgression: the denial of personal liberty to human beings. It is, therefore, surprising that there was only one voice raised against slavery, that of the Quakers. In April, 1688, Daniel Pastorius and a few German Friends of Germantown, Pennsylvania, declared that it was contrary to Christian principles for one class of people to be held in bondage by another. This protest was registered at the Quarterly Meeting of Philadelphia and later at the Yearly Meeting held at Burlington, New Jersey, but the denomination declined to take action on it. About eight years later, in 1696, the Yearly Meeting advised its members to "be careful not to encourage the bringing in of any more negroes," but this admonition was too mildly put to stop Quakers from buying

⁷Ibid., pages 423-428.

⁸Ibid., pages 428-431.

slaves. Finally, however, in 1755 the Yearly Meeting adopted the rule that all Friends who should thereafter import slaves would be excluded from the denomination, and three years later it further advised Friends to set their slaves at liberty. Thus it is evident that during the period 1700-1738 there was no serious agitation against the practice of slavery; the Quakers had been sufficiently uncomfortable about the matter to speak out against it in 1696, but their pronouncement at the time was too timorous to be effective.⁹

Industry

Shipbuilding was one of the most important industries to be developed by 1700 in colonial America. Inter-colonial as well as transatlantic commerce was expanding at a rapid rate, and the ships required for this development were built chiefly in colonial shipyards. Shipbuilding was carried on all along the coast, but especially in New England. The vessels that were launched were sold not only in the colonies, but also in England and the Mediterranean countries, and as a result British ship-builders became alarmed by the competition.

Another manufacturing industry which flourished in New England was the tanning of hides and the manufacture of shoes. Lynn was famous for the making of good shoes, and Massachusetts made all the shoes her people could use and had a surplus to sell to the other colonies.

The manufacture of woolens was conducted on a small scale in the average colonial home. The wool that the farmer raised was spun into yarn and woven into cloth and made into clothes by the members of the family.

Colonial manufacturing, however, made almost no progress during the

⁹Pennsylvania Historical Society's Memoirs, Vol. I, page 377. Also, Sharpless, Isaac, Quaker Government, Vol. I, page 32.

period 1700-1738. England, following the economic doctrine known as the mercantile theory which prevailed among nations at this time, sought to create a favorable balance of trade so that her exports might exceed her imports. Such a favorable balance of trade could be secured by importing only raw materials and converting these at home into manufactured articles and selling them abroad. Consequently, England did not want colonial manufacturing to flourish, and she took definite steps to nip it in the bud. In 1699, for instance, Parliament passed the Woolen Act making it unlawful to export woolen goods from a colony, or to transport such goods from one colony to another, or even from one place to another in the same colony for the purpose of sale. This act made it impossible lawfully to sell colonial-made cloth; if any was made it must be used in the household in which it was woven.¹⁰

Commerce

There were few roads in colonial America and those which existed were of poor quality. In Massachusetts, however, the principal towns were joined by roads, and by 1700 one could travel on horseback from Boston to New York. In New York the roads were so bad that vehicles could not move on them, and there were only two coaches in the whole colony. From New York southward the traveler on horseback might make his way safely to Norfolk, but the journey was one of great discomfort and inconvenience.

Because of the poor quality of roads, overland trade was made clearly impracticable, and commerce for the most part was conducted by ships sailing from one seaport to another. All along its seaboard, America was blessed with excellent harbors which encouraged both inter-colonial and overseas commerce.

¹⁰Forman, S. E., Op. Cit., pages 66-67.

Although trade with nations other than England was hampered to a considerable extent by the Navigation Laws of 1651 and 1653, there had nevertheless developed by 1700 an American commerce that excited the envy of the world.¹¹

As early as 1673 the first steps were taken toward the establishment of an internal postal system to meet the necessity of forwarding government letters and dispatches. In 1677, Massachusetts became the first colony to provide a plan for carrying and distributing private mail within the province. By 1717, an inter-colonial postal system had been established in New England, the Middle colonies, and southward through Virginia.¹²

The Social Life of The Colonies

Manners and Customs

Social classes were rather sharply drawn throughout colonial times despite the fact that pioneer conditions were unfavorable to their maintenance. The colonists were roughly divided into three classes: the aristocracy, the yeomanry or middle class, and the lowest class. The aristocracy consisted of provincial officers, clergymen of the established churches, wealthy merchant princes of New England and the middle colonies, and the plantation owners of New York, Rhode Island, and of the South. The members of this privileged class were known as gentlemen and were addressed with the titles of "Mister" and "Esquire." This group controlled politics and occupied all of the important offices. The majority of the white population belonged to the middle class or yeomanry; these were the small farmers, artisans, tradesmen, and hired laborers.

¹¹Ibid., pages 64-65.

¹²Chitwood, O. P., Op. Cit. pages 476-477.

The men and women who belonged to this class had to be content with the titles of "Goodman" and Goodwife," the latter usually abbreviated into "Goody." The lowest class was composed of the poor and disreputable; this group was always small as America provided unlimited opportunities of advancement to anyone of average industry and character.

In New England laws were enacted restraining the yeomanry from dressing in a manner not in keeping with their position in society. In the South the wealthy patrician families held themselves proudly aloof socially from their yeoman neighbors. Yet a qualified friendship usually existed between the aristocrat and the common man. As economic conditions improved during 1700-1738, this friendly relationship became weaker and weaker, so much so that by 1750 it had ceased to exist.¹³

There was generally plenty of food in all sections of the colonies. Meat was plentiful because there were not only domestic animals to slaughter, but wild game and fish were everywhere in abundance and therefore easily procured. Corn bread, hominy, and salt pork were the main articles of food among the poor whites and the Negroes. Garden vegetables and fruits were plentiful during the summertime. Oddly enough, however, butter was scarce and regarded as a luxury. Tea and coffee were slowly becoming popular in the first quarter of the eighteenth century, while chocolate had by this time become quite common.

The colonists consumed large quantities of alcoholic beverages. Cider and beer were popular everywhere and the stronger liquors such as rum, brandy, whisky, and imported wines were commonly used in Virginia. Even the Puritans of New England and the Quakers of Pennsylvania drank rum and Madeira wine.

¹³Ibid., pages 581-583.

The early colonists brought with them the idea that clothing should be chosen to express social rank, and because of this attitude considerable importance was attached to dress throughout the colonial period. Leather breeches were commonly worn by servants, laborers, and hunters; the attractive and picturesque hunting-jacket made of deerskin was popular among hunters and frontiersmen. In the eighteenth century men of aristocratic station usually wore silk stockings and breeches made of expensive fabrics; their black frock coats were made of broadcloth imported from England and were frequently trimmed with gold lace. The women indulged in costly dresses and furs and began wearing hoop-skirts about 1725. The Puritans frowned upon wigs for a long time, but in the early years of the eighteenth century they became popular in New England, as they were everywhere else in the English colonies.¹⁴

The colonists were noted for their early and frequent marriages. Young men and women usually married at a very early age, there being practically no economic opportunity for unmarried women, and bachelors were looked on with suspicion by the authorities. Widows and widowers usually remarried after a short period of mourning. It was normal for a man and his wife to rear a large family, frequently consisting of ten or twelve children, and families of twenty to twenty-five children were not unknown.¹⁵

Amusements

The people of New England found pleasant opportunities for social contact and entertainment in corn-husking, apple-paring, and quilting parties. Their gregarious nature was regularly served by the colonial church which each week

¹⁴Ibid., pages 588-589.

¹⁵Ibid., pages 598, 599, and 601.

attracted large congregations to its Sunday services and its Thursday night lectures. Each New England town had an average of six days each year when men of military age were required to muster for practice in the use of arms and for participation in marksmanship contests for prizes. On these days, the women, children, and older men also assembled in the town and shared in the fun and excitement. The Puritans did not observe Christmas as a holiday since they regarded it as a Roman Catholic custom, but they did place great emphasis upon Thanksgiving as a festive holiday season.

Both the Dutch and the English in New York City participated enthusiastically in all forms of amusements. Social clubs and private theatricals were established; dancing, sleighing, and fishing parties, as well as picnics were enjoyed by young people. Their chief holidays were New Year's and May Day; family reunions and visiting among friends were especially popular on these days.

Of all amusements, it seems that the people of the South enjoyed dancing best. Old and young alike danced; they were especially fond of jigs, square dances, and the Virginia reel. Outdoor sports such as fishing, fox hunting, and especially horse-racing were highly favored among the Virginians. Visiting with family and friends provided great pleasure to the people of the South. Houses were usually large, food was cheap and plentiful, and slaves stood ready to do the work, so that entertaining guests proved no hardship to the mistress or her family.

Southerners, like the New Englanders, frequently combined social pleasures with work. House-raising, log-rolling, and the like were especially popular among the small farmers in the back country. Similarly, the Negroes

always enjoyed a corn-shucking as a time of merrymaking and feasting.¹⁶

Education

By 1700, all sections of colonial America had made definite progress in the field of education, but New England far excelled both the middle and the southern colonies in this endeavor. Harvard College had been founded in 1636 primarily for the training of men for the gospel ministry. In 1647 the General Court of Massachusetts and in 1650 the General Court of Connecticut made it compulsory that all towns of at least fifty householders maintain elementary schools at public expense. Then in 1701, Yale College was founded for the same purpose as Harvard. Thus during the period 1700-1738, New England could boast of two excellent colleges, Harvard and Yale, and of the fact that elementary education was provided not only in her large centers of population but also in her small towns and villages.

In the middle colonies, the responsibility for elementary education was assumed principally by private organizations and families desiring instruction for their children. Progress in education had been slow in New York and New Jersey, but in Pennsylvania one of the first laws enacted by the Assembly specified that all children must be taught to read and write by the time they were twelve years of age. During the early decades of the eighteenth century, general interest in education was commendable in the middle colonies, but elementary schools were few in number and colleges were non-existent.

In the southern colonies, popular education had made no headway at all. From earliest times parents in these colonies had assumed the responsibility for their children's education, either teaching them personally or having them

¹⁶Ibid., pages 590-594.

instructed by tutors. This being the case, there was no feeling of urgency among the colonial leaders in the South to organize schools, either public or private. By 1700, however, there had developed a scattering of private schools in Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, but no regular public schools had as yet been established. The sons of wealthy families in the southern colonies were sent abroad, usually to England, for their college training; and, as a result of this custom, there was only slight interest in the establishment of colleges in the South. By 1700, only Virginia had made a beginning in higher education; William and Mary College had been founded in 1693.¹⁷

The Religious Life of The Colonies

The Major Religious Groups

The principal denominations among the English-speaking colonists were the Anglicans, or Episcopalians, the Puritans, the Presbyterians, the Baptists, and the Quakers. The Dutch belonged mainly to the Dutch Reformed Communion; the Swedes held to the Swedish Lutheran Church and the Germans to the Lutheran, German Reformed, and Moravian.

By the end of the seventeenth century, the Anglican denomination was well established in Maryland and Virginia, but outside these two provinces it could claim only a few churches which were located in Charleston, Philadelphia, New York, and Boston. There were fewer than fifty Episcopal ministers in all the colonies and not more than a half-dozen of these were outside Maryland and Virginia. People generally were attracted to the dissenting denominations. Moreover, the moral tone of the Church of England had suffered by the low

¹⁷Forman, S. E., Op. Cit., pages 72-73.

ethical standards brought in by the Restoration, and at the same time its leaders had become complacent as a result of their victories over Puritanism and Catholicism in England.

To counteract this disturbing situation, the English government gave every encouragement and support possible to its Established Church in America. The royal governors, backed and encouraged by the home authorities provided financial aid and legislative support. The Society for the Propagation of the Gospel in Foreign Parts, frequently spoken of as the Venerable Society, was organized in 1701 in England in the hope that it would further strengthen the Established Church. The purpose of the Society was to do missionary work among the Indians and Negroes and to establish churches for white people in areas where Christianity was neglected. Large numbers of missionaries filled with zeal and energy were sent to America to evangelize Indians and Negroes, as well as white settlers. This effort met with best success in South Carolina, and the church soon took deep root in that province.¹⁸

The Anglican Church was sanctioned by the laws of Virginia, Maryland, and the Carolinas, yet its authority was fully recognized only in Virginia. There it was supreme; the articles of its faith and its form of worship were prescribed by law and taxes were levied upon all for its support. There was never a resident bishop in colonial America, and consequently the churches were under the supervision of the Archbishop of Canterbury until about 1673 and of the Bishop of London after that date. From the latter part of the seventeenth century to the end of the colonial period this authority was represented in America by deputies known as commissaries.

¹⁸Chitwood, O. P., Op. Cit., pages 516-520.

In all New England except Rhode Island, where the Baptists held full sway, the Congregational Church--as the church of the Puritans was called--was the ruling force in political and social as well as religious affairs. In every town in New Plymouth, New Haven, Massachusetts, and Connecticut there was at least one Congregational Church, and usually there was more than one in the larger towns. The voters in these towns elected the ministers who presided over their churches. During the period 1700-1738 all the inhabitants, whether church members or not, were taxed to support the Puritan clergy and were required to attend services at the Congregational Church.

The Congregationalists and the Presbyterians had much in common. Both adhered firmly to the teachings of Calvin but differed as to their mode of church government. According to the Congregational plan each church was a law unto itself with complete freedom to govern itself, and the authority of the denomination stemmed from a loose association of the churches. The Presbyterians, on the other hand, embraced a representative government manifested in a system of ascending courts.¹⁹

There were a few Presbyterians on Long Island by the middle of the seventeenth century, and a few Scottish immigrants of Presbyterian persuasion had come to several of the colonies after the Restoration. The denomination, however, made no serious impression upon the colonies until the coming of Francis Makemie (1683) who made evangelistic tours from South Carolina to New York. By 1700, as a result of his labors, the denomination was growing rapidly, especially in the middle colonies. In 1708 the first Presbytery (Presbytery of Philadelphia) was organized, and a few years later (about 1714) the Scotch-Irish

¹⁹Forman, S. E., Op. Cit., page 70.

emigration to America began, a development which assured the future of Presbyterianism in America.²⁰

The Baptist Church in America had its origin in 1639 in Rhode Island when Roger Williams and Ezekiel Holliman immersed each other, and these two leaders with eleven others who were baptized at the same time organized a church society. From this time on the Baptists spread and by 1725 they had churches in all the colonies from Massachusetts to South Carolina.

The Baptists contended that church membership should be confined to Christians only, and that baptism (immersion) should be administered only to the converted; thus they rejected the practice of infant baptism. Further, they adopted the congregational form of church government and advocated the complete separation of church and state. The first Association of Baptist churches was formed in Philadelphia in 1707.²¹

Despite the rapid spread of their faith, Baptists generally were not popular. German Anabaptists had engaged in revolutionary outbreaks against the social order abroad, and this reputation was unjustly stamped upon American Baptists by many colonial church authorities. Moreover, the Baptist rejection of infant baptism was deeply resented by those churches which engaged in this practice.²²

The Quakers were not so numerous as the denominations already discussed, but they played an important role in the history of the colonies, particularly in Pennsylvania. Their influence was also strongly felt in the administration of Rhode Island, New Jersey, and North Carolina. The Quakers interpreted

²⁰Sweet, W. W., Religion In Colonial America, pages 254-256.

²¹Chitwood, O. P., Op. Cit., page 526.

²²Ibid., pages 530-531.

literally the injunction "swear not at all," and they therefore refused to take the oath of allegiance required by the English government, or to take the oath as jurors, or to give evidence in court. In addition to these abstinences, they refused to bear arms. These positions became extremely unpopular among the colonists and caused severe persecution to be inflicted upon members of their society in Virginia, Massachusetts, Maryland, and New Hampshire.

A more intolerant spirit than that exhibited toward Quakers and Baptists found expression in the laws against Roman Catholics. The number of Catholics in the colonies was always small; they were more numerous in Maryland than elsewhere, but even in this province they were in the seventeenth century outnumbered by the Protestants, and during the eighteenth century they constituted only a small minority of the population. Since the Roman Catholic Church had exercised authority in political affairs in Europe, Protestants feared that it might do the same thing in America if it were allowed to become sufficiently powerful. Catholics, therefore, were excluded from New England and New York and were restricted as to their rights in Virginia and Maryland. Since they had a stronger hold in Maryland than elsewhere, the laws after 1689 were more strict against them there than in any other colony.

The cause of religious toleration developed slowly in colonial America. In Rhode Island, Delaware, and Pennsylvania no attempt was ever made to establish a state church, and therefore people of all religious faiths were tolerated. The Toleration Act of 1689 granted freedom of worship to all Protestants, and this principle was adopted by all the American colonies during the early decades of the eighteenth century. No relief, however, was offered to the Roman Catholics until the end of the colonial era.²³

²³Ibid., pages 527-532.

The State of Religion

Beginning in the latter part of the seventeenth century and continuing until the time of the Great Awakening in the eighteenth century, there was a gradual decline of religious fervor throughout the American colonies. The Congregational Church in New England, the Anglican Church in Virginia and Maryland, and the various religious groups in the middle colonies all settled down into a comfortable and complacent respectability and prosperity.²⁴

A random survey of election sermons preached during the early decades of the eighteenth century shows the concern of the ministers for the lack of religious interest during these times. In 1700 Samuel Willard preached on "The Perils of the Times Displayed"; in 1711 Stephen Buckingham's theme was "The Unreasonableness and Danger of a People's Renouncing Their Subjection to God"; William Russell's subject in 1730 was "The Decay of Love to God in Churches, Offensive and Dangerous."²⁵

The lowering of requirements for membership in the Congregational Church beginning in 1657 undoubtedly contributed to the weakness of religion in New England during the early decades of the eighteenth century. It was a custom in the New England churches from the earliest times not to receive an applicant for membership unless satisfactory evidence of regeneration could be offered. Usually the recounting of such a religious experience or conversion took place before the congregation. By the beginning of the second half of the seventeenth century, some of the Puritan leaders felt that this requirement would have to be changed, for in the second generation of Puritans then reaching maturity,

²⁴Ibid., page 539.

²⁵Sweet, W. W., Op. Cit., page 273.

there were many people who were of good moral character but who were not conscious of having experienced a spiritual rebirth. If these people were denied church membership, they could not present their children for baptism. To avoid this situation, the plan was advanced whereby all persons of blameless life who would accept the main doctrines of Christianity and promise obedience to the church discipline became affiliated with the church as associate members. Such members were allowed to present their children for baptism, but they themselves were not allowed to partake of communion. This arrangement, called the "Half-Way Covenant," was first adopted by a small assembly of Congregational ministers meeting in Boston in 1657. At first this practice met with considerable opposition from conservative leaders, but within a few years it was widely adopted in New England. In 1699 the Brattle Street Church of Boston began receiving candidates into full membership without requiring them to relate publicly their religious experience.²⁶

By 1700 a decided tendency toward liberalism had developed in American theology. The liberals objected to the Calvinistic doctrine of man's total depravity and his consequent inability to do anything toward his salvation; they contended that salvation is open not to an elect few but to all who will accept the offer of salvation. The introduction of this Arminian position into the religious thought of America precipitated a serious division of opinion which in turn served to weaken the testimony of those denominations which adhered to Calvinistic theology.²⁷

Furthermore, the spirit of worldliness had developed in the colonial church. There had emerged in all the older colonies, especially in New England

²⁶Chitwood, O. P., Op. Cit., pages 534-536.

²⁷Ibid., page 539.

and Virginia, a prosperous class of merchants, traders, and planters who had money enough to buy the good things of the world and leisure enough to enjoy them. This group naturally regarded the Spartan discipline of the early days as an unnecessary restraint on comfort and joy. Because of this attitude there was a general relaxation of the rigid standards of morality which had previously characterized religion in colonial America.

Quakerism no longer displayed the zeal which had characterized that faith before 1700. In Rhode Island, New Jersey, and Pennsylvania where the Quakers were most numerous, they were no longer persecuted thanks to the Toleration Act of 1689, and as a consequence the fires of their religious zeal were not as bright as they formerly were. There was Quaker control of the Pennsylvania assembly until 1757 and along with this firm grip upon government came complacency. They continued to adhere to the forms of their religion but there was a general forsaking of their early ideals; they no longer strongly advocated non-resistance; they bought and sold slaves, and consented to increasingly harsh punishment for criminals.²⁸

The Anglican Church, being the established faith in Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, was charged with the spiritual well-being of the inhabitants of this section but had seriously failed to discharge its responsibility. In Virginia, where its authority was unquestioned, the Church possessed endowments, parsonages and ^Eglibes, and the salaries of its ministers and officials were raised by public tax. Being thus assured of a comfortable and effortless existence, the Church became less and less aggressive and more and more complacent. The chief reason, however, for the Church's general failure in the southern

²⁸Bacon, L. W., A History of American Christianity, page 147.

colonies was the unfortunate fact that its clergy was unfit for positions of spiritual leadership. In England, the sacred offices of the Christian ministry were given by patronage, and they frequently fell into the hands of debauched and corrupt adventurers who then came to America, settled in the southern colonies, identified themselves with the wealthy plantation owners, and pretended to serve the church in the name of Christ. The maintenance of this rabble of simonists^{1ACS} became a burden to the public treasuries, and year after year the people grew increasingly impatient with this unfortunate situation.²⁹

Thus there were a number of reasons for the coldness and indifference which settled upon the religious life of America during the early decades of the eighteenth century. That there was an urgent need everywhere for a revival which would deepen the interest of people in the faith of their fathers is not to be disputed.

The Beginning of The Great Awakening

Religion in the American colonies was aroused from its deep complacency by a spectacular revival known as "The Great Awakening." This stirring and dramatic work of God had its beginning in two separate revivalistic movements, one in the middle colonies and the other in New England.

In the middle colonies the revival fires were first kindled by the labors of Theodore J. Frelinghuysen, pastor of four Dutch Reformed Churches in the Raritan Valley of New Jersey. Frelinghuysen, who had been educated in Germany and had fallen under the influence of Pietism, championed a strict morality and the doctrine of spiritual rebirth. His revival reached its height in 1726 and

²⁹Ibid., page 148.

prepared the way for the next phase of the middle colony awakening, that among the Scotch-Irish Presbyterians.³⁰

In the commencement of the Presbyterian revival Gilbert Tennent was the principal leader; he was the eldest son of William Tennent and had been trained privately for the ministry by his father. In 1727 he became pastor of a church at New Brunswick where he was much impressed with what he saw of the results of the work of Frelinghuysen. The example and fraternal counsel of this good man made young Tennent realize the shallowness of his own work and challenged him to more earnest efforts and prayers. Tennent became critically ill; and, thinking that death was imminent, he promised God that if his life were extended he would endeavor wholeheartedly to promote the kingdom of Christ. He recovered from his illness and, faithful to his promise, devoted himself with renewed consecration and zeal to his work as a Christian minister. He invariably followed his public preaching with an invitation to all who felt the need of spiritual advice to share their problems with him. Thus he engaged in a two-fold ministry of preaching and counseling, "which method," he states, "was sealed by the Holy Spirit in the conviction and conversion of a considerable number of persons, at various times and in different places."³¹

The technique and spirit of Gilbert Tennent's revival were soon carried into Pennsylvania by a group of young ministers known for their flaming evangelical zeal, all graduates of the small theological school, frequently called in derision the "Log College," which Gilbert Tennent's father had set up at Neshaminy, Pennsylvania. Throughout the seventeen thirties the Presbyterian

³⁰Sweet, W. W., Op. Cit., pages 274-275.

³¹Bacon, L. W., Op. Cit., page 163.

revival mounted higher and higher as new converts were reached and new congregations were formed.

The famous New England phase of the Great Awakening began under the preaching of Jonathan Edwards at Northampton in the fall of 1734. Edwards was educated at Yale College and remained there two years after graduation for further study in the field of theology. Having completed his post-graduate studies, he spent eight months in charge of the newly organized Presbyterian Church in New York; after this experience, he returned to Yale for two years to serve as a tutor. Then at the age of twenty-three he was called from Yale to the church at Northampton to serve as colleague with his maternal grandfather, the aged Solomon Stoddard. There he was ordained February 15, 1727, and two years later with the death of Stoddard, he was left sole pastor of the Northampton Church.

It is said that in Edwards there was "a rare combination of fervor of feeling, of almost oriental fertility of imagination, and intellectual acumen, which clothed all that he said with glowing force, while beneath his words flowed the stream of a most carefully elaborated theologic system."³² Certainly his intensely earnest sermons, his holy life, and loving prayers were not long in bearing abundant fruit. His preaching themes were justification by faith, the awfulness of God's justice, the excellency of Christ, the duty of pressing into the kingdom of God. As a result of his labors, a powerful and far-reaching revival developed; a serious preoccupation with spiritual affairs began to spread over the whole of Northampton; young and old alike were concerned about eternal things. This concern was deepened by the vividness with which Edwards

³²Walker, Williston, A History of The Congregational Churches In The United States, Page 254.



depicted the wrath of God in his sermon, "Sinners In The Hands Of An Angry God," which was first delivered in Enfield, Connecticut. By May, 1735, when the revival began to abate, more than three hundred persons were believed to have experienced a regenerative change. The influence of such a great work was quick to spread. The whole Connecticut Valley (including Massachusetts as well as Connecticut) and its neighboring regions felt the influence of it. News of these unusual events was sent to England by Rev. Dr. Benjamin Colman of Boston, and at the request of Colman's English correspondents, Rev. Dr. Isaac Watts and John Guyse, Edwards wrote his "Narrative of the Surprising Work of God," which was printed and circulated on both sides of the Atlantic during 1737-1738.³³

Thus the Great Awakening had its beginning in New Jersey, in Pennsylvania, and in New England, and within a few years was to be revived and expanded under the leadership of George Whitefield.

Westward Expansion

In the last years of the seventeenth century England and France entered into a protracted struggle for power in Europe, a struggle which had repercussions in America in the form of a series of border wars. King William's War began in 1689; in America, most of the fighting on the English side was done by the colonists of New York and New England. This struggle ended with the Treaty of Ryswick in 1697, but within five years England and France again found themselves at odds and entered into Queen Anne's War. This time the border warfare in America was confined to the frontier communities of New England. The war was brought to a close by the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, and for the next thirty years the French and English in America lived in peace.

³³Ibid., pages 255-256.

The border wars were of course unfavorable to a rapid settlement of the back country in New England and New York. They had little effect, however, in checking the westward advance in Pennsylvania and Virginia. The actual settlement of the western section of these colonies was effected largely by German religious refugees (the "Pennsylvania Dutch") and the Scotch-Irish.³⁴

Beginning in the seventeenth and extending into the eighteenth century many Germans fled French domination and ruthlessness in the Rhine valley, lived in Holland for awhile, and finally emigrated to America. Some of them settled in New York in the Mohawk Valley, but most of them settled in Pennsylvania. They were excellent pioneers and by 1730 they had reached the Susquehanna and had founded Harrisburg.³⁵

Along with the Germans in the settlement of western Pennsylvania came the Scotch-Irish. They were not Irish at all but Scottish people who had first emigrated to northern Ireland and then to America. Parliament in 1698 by a series of repressive acts destroyed the woolen industry of northern Ireland, and as a result twenty thousand of the Protestant citizens of Ulster were deprived of employment. This blow was followed in the reign of Queen Anne by laws which persecuted the Scotch-Irish because of their Presbyterian faith. There was good reason, therefore, for these people to leave Ireland and come to America. Their immigration came as a tidal wave. In 1729 the governor of Pennsylvania said, "It looks as if all Ireland would send all its inhabitants hither, for last week not less than six ships arrived." These folk proved to be the best of pioneers, and they were soon out on the frontier making settlements wherever they could find good vacant land. They gave little heed to the

³⁴Forman, S. E., Op. Cit., page 82.

³⁵Ibid., page 85.

claims of the Indians, for they thought "it was against the laws of God and nature that so much good land should be idle while so many Christians wanted it to work on and raise their bread."³⁶

The westward advance began in Virginia when in 1716 Alexander Spotswood, then governor of the colony, took a party of fifty men and pushed out in the Shenandoah Valley to claim it for England. Although the first settlers in the Shenandoah were Virginians, the Germans and Scotch-Irish of Pennsylvania were the first people who came in large numbers to settle there.

The Thirteenth Colony: Georgia

In 1729, Parliament appointed General James Oglethorpe chairman of a committee of fourteen members to investigate the conditions of prisons in England. The reports made by this committee in 1729-30 pictured a scene of horror, filth, fever, of shackles, thumb-screw, iron skull-caps, and of other means of torture. By means of these reports many governmental officials were brought to a sympathetic understanding of the plight of prisoners, especially insolvent debtors, and a memorial was presented to Parliament on September 17, 1730, to form "The Corporation for establishing charitable colonies in America." On January 18, 1731, a committee of the Privy Council decided to request the attorney and solicitor general to draft a charter for a colony which would serve such charitable ends as had been recommended. This action was approved by King George II and his Council, and thus the establishment of the thirteenth English colony in America was assured.

The proposed colony was named Georgia, and was to stretch from the Savannah to the Altamaha Rivers. The primary reason for its founding was to

³⁶Ibid., page 86.

bring relief to poor subjects who, through misfortune and lack of employment, had accumulated heavy debts and had been imprisoned for inability to meet their financial obligations. In addition to serving this worthy purpose, it was hoped that Georgia would contribute to the increase of trade, navigation, and wealth of the realm, and at the same time fulfill the need of a buffer colony between South Carolina on the north and the Spaniards on the south. Philanthropic motives were uppermost in the minds of such men as Sir John Percival and General James Oglethorpe; the latter's sympathy for the oppressed stretched even beyond England, for in a speech before the House of Commons on January 13, 1732, he suggested the colony as a refuge for oppressed Protestants.

The charter under which Georgia was founded was signed by King George II on June 9, 1732, and established a modified proprietary government with a board of trustees, but there was to be no representative assembly. Twenty gentlemen and noblemen formed the Trustees for establishing the colony, but not more than seven or eight were actively engaged in promoting the undertaking, and only one, James Oglethorpe, came to America with the colonists.

Many people were anxious to join the colony, but the Trustees exercised scrupulous care in selecting only the most worthy of the debtor class to become settlers. On November 17, 1732, Oglethorpe and thirty-five families embarked for America; without serious mishap they reached Charleston, South Carolina, on January 13, 1733, where the Carolinians extended them a cordial welcome. Proceeding southward, Oglethorpe and his band of one hundred and fourteen colonists landed at Yamacraw Bluff on February 12, 1733, and, after kneeling in thanksgiving and prayer to God, began laying the foundation of Savannah.³⁷

³⁷Johnson, Amanda, Georgia, As Colony And State, pages 43-48.

Oglethorpe's immediate task upon arrival in Georgia was to establish friendly relations with the Indians. After selecting a site on which he desired to plant his colony, he obtained permission to settle there from Tomachichi, the chief of the Yamacraws. Later this agreement was sanctioned by the entire Yamacraw tribe, and the terms of settlement were agreed upon May 21, 1733. The Trustees were given full right and title to all lands in the tidewater region, lying between the Savannah and the Altamaha Rivers, except the islands of Ossabaw, Sapelo, and St. Catherines, retained by the Indians for hunting, fishing, and bathing, also a small tract near Savannah, reserved as a common meeting place for themselves and the colonists. The Indians promised not to molest the English settlement, and because of their faithfulness to this promise and the diplomacy of Oglethorpe the Indian-white relationship proved to be a minor problem during the Trusteeship of the colony.

In April, 1734, Oglethorpe took the old chief, Tomachichi, his wife Scenauki, his nephew, and five Indian chiefs to England for a visit. England extended every courtesy to these Indian guests to assure them of her friendship and good will.³⁸

Oglethorpe's desire to have Georgia serve as a refuge for persecuted Protestant groups in Europe was soon fulfilled. The Salzburgers were among the first to come. They were Lutherans, who had lived in the Archbishopric of Salzburg, Austria. Poor, inured to hardships, industrious, and intensely religious, they adopted the hymn-book and Bible as their principal weapons. Persecuted during the reign of Leopold I and ordered to accept Catholicism, they fled in 1729 and for some time wandered hither and thither. The Trustees,

³⁸Ibid., pages 59-61.

learning of their plight through the Society for the Promotion of Christian Knowledge, invited them to take up their abode in Georgia.

They embarked from Dover, England, January, 1734, reaching first Charleston and finally, Savannah. There were fifty-six persons with their two pastors, the Reverends Christian Gronau and Martin Bolzius. They chose a site about thirty miles inland from Savannah, named Ebenezer. In 1736, they transferred their town to a high ridge nearer Savannah, and called it New Ebenezer. Others soon joined them so that by 1751 they numbered one thousand, two hundred.

The Moravians, founded by Count Zinzendorf, were driven out of Bohemia by the thousands; some wandered into Saxony, and from there cast longing eyes toward America. Count Zinzendorf made overtures to the Trustees of Georgia on behalf of his people and finally obtained their cooperation in his plan of settling a Moravian band in Georgia. These people were noted for their sobriety, good order, and thrift. The first group to sail for Georgia landed in Savannah April 6, 1735, and were settled at a site between Savannah and Ebenezer. A second company, led by David Nitschmann, came in February, 1736. The Moravians became extremely unpopular among the colonists because of their refusal to bear arms. In 1738 they asked the Trustees for permission to leave the colony; this permission was not granted until 1740 at which time they sailed for Pennsylvania.

The Trustees commissioned Lieutenant Hugh Mackay to bring over a colony of Scotch Highlanders. In January, 1736, he arrived with one hundred and thirty freemen and servants, fifty women and children, and their own minister, the Reverend John McLeod from Iverness, Scotland. They settled on the Altamaha River, sixteen miles from St. Simons by water, and named their settlement New

IV
 Iverness and its province, Darien. They were people of hardy constitution and sterling character; the men were industrious farmers and possessed splendid military qualifications. They loved their native Scotland, and for the most part, lived and dressed in Scottish fashion.

On September 26, 1736, a colony of two hundred and twenty-seven sturdy men, English and foreigners, arrived in Georgia to establish Frederica as an advanced military post to ward off the Spaniards. Many other settlements of less importance sprang up. About four miles from Savannah, two villages a mile apart, Hamstead and Highgate, were laid out in 1733. Among the settlements that were short-lived were: Thunderbolt, entirely in decay by 1737; Abercorn, founded in 1733 and deserted in 1737; Manchecolas, erected at Skidaway narrows; Berrimacke, a settlement of twenty-four families on Cumberland Island; and Joseph's Town, founded by some Scotch families on the Savannah River but abandoned because of malaria, fever, and crop failure.³⁹

It was to Frederica that Charles Wesley went as chaplain when in 1736 at the invitation of the Trustees he and his brother John came to Georgia. Charles, being yet a young man, fresh from Oxford, lacked the necessary wisdom and tact to deal with difficult frontier problems and in his capacity as chaplain of the military post at Frederica sought to regulate too minutely men's moral and religious life. As a result, he lost his influence and, becoming ill, returned to England within a year.

John, who later founded Methodism, took charge of the Church of England congregation in Savannah, a body of seven hundred members. In his capacity as minister, he sought to enforce a plan of strict, systematic religious instruction. The colonists were not agreeable to an enforced discipline, especially

³⁹Ibid., pages 52-57.

in religious affairs, and largely because of his activity in this direction, Wesley became extremely unpopular. Many claimed moreover that he meddled in their affairs, took sides in factional disputes, and quarreled with the leading families. He refused communion to a Mrs. Williamson on the ground that she had not previously notified him of her intention to commune. Finally, Wesley was arrested and £ 1,000 was demanded of him for damages. A grand jury cleared him of all charges; he then left Georgia on December 2, 1737.⁴⁰ Of his sojourn in the New World, he said: "This, then have I learned in the ends of the earth: That I am fallen short of the glory of God"; and again: "I shook off the dust of my feet and left Georgia, after having preached the Gospel there (not as I ought but as I was able) one year and nearly nine months."⁴¹

It was, of course, the activities of the Wesleys that first attracted Whitefield to the New World. It was his destiny to begin his labors in Georgia, unique among the original thirteen colonies in being designed to relieve pauperism. This colony, which plays such an important role in the American phase of Whitefield's ministry, grew substantially during its early years, for with the financial backing of the crown the Trustees were enabled to send large numbers of colonists to Georgia. By June, 1740, one thousand, five hundred and twenty-one settlers had been assisted in emigrating to the new colony; in addition to these, other settlers had come at their own expense.⁴²

⁴⁰Ibid., pages 84-85.

⁴¹Wesley, John, Journal, Vol. I, page 76.

⁴²Brooks, R. P., History of Georgia, page 54.

CHAPTER III

THE SEVEN VISITS OF WHITEFIELD TO AMERICA¹

First Visit to America: May 7, 1738 - September 9, 1738

| | |
|-------------|---|
| May 7, 1738 | Arrived at Savannah, Georgia |
| May 19 | Visited Hamstead and Highgate, two parochial villages, about five miles from Savannah |
| July 10 | To Ebenezer, the place where the Salzburgers were settled |
| August | To Frederica, one hundred miles from Savannah |
| | Visited Darien (near Frederica) where a group of Scottish Highlanders was settled. |
| August 16 | Returned to Savannah |
| August 28 | Left Savannah for Charleston |
| September 9 | Embarked at Charleston for England |

Second Visit to America: October 30, 1739 - January 16, 1741

| | |
|------------------|---|
| October 30, 1739 | Landed at Lewis Town, about one hundred and fifty miles from Philadelphia |
| November 2 | Arrived in Philadelphia |
| November 12 | Left Philadelphia for New York |
| | Traveled through Burlington to Trent |
| November 14 | To Brunswick and to New York |
| November 19 | Left New York and proceeded to Elizabeth Town |
| November 20 | To New Brunswick |
| November 21 | To Maidenhead and to Trent Town |
| November 22 | To Neshaminy |
| November 23 | To Abingdon and to Philadelphia |
| November 27 | To German Town, seven miles from Philadelphia |
| November 29 | Left Philadelphia; to Chester |
| November 30 | To Wilmington |
| December 1 | To Newcastle and to Christian Bridge |
| December 2 | Returned to Newcastle |
| December 3 | To North East in Maryland, crossed the Susquehanna by ferry |
| December 4 | To Newtown |
| December 5 | To Annapolis |

¹Whitefield, G., Journals; Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M.A.; Gillies, J., Memoirs of the Life of the Reverend George Whitefield, M.A.; and Tyerman, L., The Life Of The Rev. George Whitefield.

December 8, 1739 To Upper Marlborough
 December 9 To Piscataway
 December 10 Reached the Potomac River
 December 11 Crossed the Potomac River; spent the night in a home,
 twenty-nine miles from the river, near Seals Church
 December 12 To Piscataway Ferry
 December 13 Spent the night in the home of Colonel Whiting
 December 14 To Williamsburg, the metropolis of Virginia
 December 16 Left Williamsburg and spent the night with
 Captain R-----n
 December 17 Came to an ordinary where they met with "indifferent
 entertainment"
 December 19 Spent night at home of Colonel O-----n, in North
 Carolina
 December 20 To Eden Town
 December 22 To Bath Town
 December 23 In Bath Town
 December 24 Crossed Pamlico River, to Newborn Town
 December 26 Lodged in a house in the woods, about thirty-five
 miles from Newborn Town
 December 28 To New Town on Cape Fear River
 December 30 Crossed Cape Fear River, and lodged in the home
 of the High Sheriff of the county
 January 1, 1740 To tavern, five miles within South Carolina
 January 5 To Charleston
 January 8 Embarked in open canoe for Georgia
 January 10 Arrived in Savannah
 March 13 Arrived in Charleston
 March 21 Arrived in Savannah
 April 2 Embarked in sloop, "Savannah," for Pennsylvania
 April 13 Arrived in Newcastle, Pennsylvania
 April 14 - 23 In Philadelphia
 April 23 To Neshaminy
 April 24 To Shippack
 April 25 To Amwell
 April 26 To New Brunswick
 April 28 To Woodbridge
 April 29 To New York
 May 5 Left New York and proceeded to Freehold
 May 6 To Allen's Town and to Burlington
 May 7 To Bristol and to Philadelphia
 May 12 Left Philadelphia and proceeded to Wilmington
 May 13 To Whiteclay Creek
 May 14 To Nottingham
 May 15 To Fagg's Manor, to Newcastle, boarded sloop,
 "Savannah"
 June 5 Arrived in Savannah
 June 30 Left Savannah
 July 2 Arrived in Charleston
 July 24 Sailed for Savannah
 August 17 Sailed from Savannah for Charleston
 August 21 Arrived in Charleston

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| September 14, 1740 | Embarked at Charleston for Newport, Rhode Island |
| September 18 | Arrived at Boston |
| September 24 | Preached at Cambridge, the chief college in New England |
| September 29 | Left Boston and proceeded to Ipswich |
| September 30 | To Newbury |
| October 1 | To Hampton, to Portsmouth, and to York |
| October 3 | In Portsmouth and to Newbury |
| October 4 | To Ipswich |
| October 6 | To Marble Head, to Maulden, and to Boston |
| October 13 | Left Boston and proceeded to Concord |
| October 14 | To Sudbury, to Marlborough, to Worcester |
| October 17 | Arrived at Northampton |
| October 20 | Left Northampton and proceeded to Westfield and to Springfield |
| October 21 | To Suffield |
| October 22 | To Hertford and to Weathersfield |
| October 23 | To Middletown, to New Haven (where he spent three days), to Milford, Stratford, Fairfield, Newark, and Stanford |
| October 30 | Arrived in New York |
| November 3 | Left New York and proceeded to Philadelphia by way of Staten Island, Newark, Baskinridge, New Brunswick, and Trenton |
| November 8 | Arrived in Philadelphia |
| November 17 | Left Philadelphia and proceeded to Savannah by way of Gloucester, Greenwich, Piles Grove, Cohansie, Salem, Newcastle, Whiteclay Creek, Fagg's Manor, Nottingham, Bohemia, St. George's, Reedy Island, and Charleston |
| December 13 | Arrived at Savannah |
| January 1, 1741 | Left Savannah for Charleston |
| January 4 | Arrived in Charleston |
| January 16 | Embarked at Charleston for England |

Third Visit to America:

October 26, 1744 - June 2, 1748

| | |
|------------------|--|
| October 26, 1744 | Landed at York, in New England, and proceeded to Portsmouth |
| November 26 | Arrived in Boston |
| | Whitefield seems to have spent about three months in Boston and its neighborhood, partly in preaching, and partly in writing pamphlets and sermons for the press. It is impossible, however, through want of materials, to trace his itinerary until 1746. |
| January 1, 1746 | At Bethesda Orphan House, near Savannah, Georgia |
| April | Visited New York |
| August | In Philadelphia |

| | |
|------------------|--|
| October, 1746 | In Queen Ann's County, Maryland Whitefield spent a month in Maryland, preaching in seven counties |
| November 8 | Proceeded to Virginia and to Georgia |
| January 23, 1747 | In Charleston |
| March 15 | Again in Charleston |
| March 21 | Left Charleston for Maryland |
| April 27 | Arrived in Bohemia, Maryland, spent a month here |
| May 30 | In Philadelphia |
| June 27 | In New York |
| July 20 | In Boston |
| July 21 | In Charlestown (in New England) |
| July 24 | In Portsmouth and to York |
| July 29 | To Newbury, to Exeter, and to Durham |
| August 27 | In New York |
| August 31 | Left New York and proceeded to Philadelphia |
| September 11 | Left Philadelphia |
| September 17 | In Bohemia, Maryland Subsequently spent a few days in Maryland, proceeded to Virginia, and to Bath-Town, North Carolina |
| October 18 | To Wilmington, Cape Fear, and proceeded to Charleston |
| October 26 | Left Charleston and proceeded to Savannah |
| March 6, 1748 | Embarked at Charleston for Bermudas |
| June 2 | Embarked at Bermudas for England |

Fourth Visit to America:

October, 1751 - April, 1752

| | |
|------------------|---|
| October, 1751 | Landed in America (This visit to America seems to have been spent chiefly in Georgia and South Carolina; very little, however, is known of his proceedings.) |
| November 20 | At Bethesda Orphan House, near Savannah |
| December 26 | In Charleston |
| January 25, 1752 | At Bethesda Orphan House |
| February 1 | In Charleston |
| Early April | Embarked for England |

Fifth Visit to America:

May 26, 1754 - March 27, 1755

| | |
|--------------|--|
| May 26, 1754 | Landed in South Carolina Proceeded to Bethesda Orphan House Returned to Charleston and embarked for New York |
| July 26 | Landed in New York |
| August 7 | In Philadelphia |
| September 2 | In New York |
| September 30 | In Elizabeth Town, New Jersey |
| October 13 | In Boston |

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| December 25, 1754 | In Maryland |
| December 27 | In Bohemia, Maryland |
| January, 1755 | Into Virginia |
| January 18 | Left Virginia and entered North Carolina |
| | Traveled through North Carolina, South Carolina, |
| | and into Georgia to Bethesda Orphan House |
| February 26 | In Charleston |
| March 27 | Embarked for England |

Sixth Visit to America:

September 1, 1763 - June 9, 1765

| | |
|--------------------|---|
| September 1, 1763 | Landed in Virginia |
| September 7 | Proceeding to Philadelphia |
| September 29 | In Philadelphia |
| | (Spent two months in Philadelphia) |
| Late November | In New York |
| | (Spent two months in New York) |
| Late January, 1764 | Left New York and proceeded to New England |
| February 13 | In Boston |
| March 23 | In Portsmouth |
| April 20 | In Boston |
| | (Remained in Boston for better than two months) |
| June 25 | In New York |
| | (Remained in New York almost three months) |
| September 21 | In Philadelphia |
| October 21 | Left Philadelphia |
| | (Traveled through Virginia, North Carolina, and |
| | South Carolina) |
| December 3 | Left Charleston and proceeded to Savannah |
| February 21, 1765 | Returned to Charleston |
| March 29 | At Wilmington, Cape Fear |
| | (Probably traveled through Virginia and Maryland) |
| May 4 | At Newcastle (30 miles from Philadelphia) |
| June 9 | Embarked from New York for England |

Seventh Visit to America:

November 30, 1769 - September 30, 1770

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| November 30, 1769 | Arrived at Charleston |
| December 10 | Left Charleston for Savannah |
| December 14 | Arrived in Savannah |
| | (Proceeded to Bethesda Orphan House) |
| January 28, 1770 | Entertained the Governor, James Wright, the |
| | Council, the House of Assembly of Georgia |
| | at Bethesda Orphan House |
| February 10 | In Charleston |
| March 8 | Returned to Bethesda |
| May 6 | Arrived in Philadelphia |
| June 23 | Arrived in New York |
| July 31 | Sailed from New York for New Port |

| | |
|------------------|---|
| August 4-8, 1770 | In New Port |
| August 9-12 | In Providence |
| August 13 | In Attleborough |
| August 14 | In Wrentham |
| August 15-25 | In Boston, except August 19, in Malden |
| August 26 | In Medford |
| August 27 | In Charlestown |
| August 28 | In Cambridge |
| August 29-30 | In Boston |
| August 31 | In Roxbury Plain |
| September 1 | In Milton |
| September 2 | In Roxbury |
| September 3 | In Boston |
| September 5 | In Salem |
| September 6 | In Marble Head |
| September 7 | In Salem |
| September 8 | In Cape Ann |
| September 9 | In Ipswich |
| September 10-11 | In Newbury Port |
| September 12-13 | In Rowley |
| September 14-16 | Disabled by violent diarrhea |
| September 17-19 | In Boston |
| September 20 | In Newton |
| September 21-22 | Ill |
| September 23-25 | In Portsmouth |
| September 26 | In Kittery |
| September 27 | In Old York |
| September 28 | In Portsmouth |
| September 29 | In Exeter and proceeded to Newbury Port |
| September 30 | Died in Newbury Port at 6:00 A.M. |

CHAPTER IV

HIS SOCIAL INTERESTS AND ACCOMPLISHMENTS

Whitefield is world famous for his phenomenal success as an evangelist. The public eye has so intently focused upon this major phase of his life, that his social interests and accomplishments have usually been overlooked. This being the case, all obtainable information pertinent to the establishment of Bethesda Orphan House, his attitude towards slavery, and his role in the development of certain higher educational institutions in America is presented in this chapter.

Bethesda Orphan House

Whitefield was always an enormous letter writer, but of the numerous letters which he doubtless wrote during his first visit to America only one has been preserved. It was written from Savannah on June 10, 1738, and contains one sentence of particular significance to the immediate purpose of this chapter: "What I have most at heart is the building an orphan house, which I trust will be effected at my return to England."

Many of the colonists being unaccustomed to manual toil and the extreme heat of Georgia died prematurely; among these were a number of parents whose children were left as public charges. The advisability of founding an orphanage had been called to Whitefield's attention by Charles Wesley who, in conjunction with General Oglethorpe, had given serious consideration to the project. During his initial visit to Georgia, Whitefield had seen at first hand the growing need for an orphanage, and therefore the matter rested heavily upon his heart. Thus he wrote the following paragraph:

When I came to Georgia, I found many poor orphans, who though taken notice of by the Honourable Trustees, yet, through the neglect of persons that acted under them, were in miserable circumstances. For want of a house to breed them up in, the poor little ones were tumbled out here and there, and, besides the hurt they received by bad examples, forgot at home what they learnt at school. Others were at hard services, and likely to have no education at all. Upon seeing this, I thought I could not better show my regard to God and my country, than by getting a house and land for these children, where they might learn to labour, read, and write, and, at the same time, be brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

In July, 1738, Whitefield visited an orphanage near Savannah in Ebenezer, the place where the Salzburgers were settled. He was favourably impressed with the work which he found in progress there, and wrote:

They have likewise an Orphan House, in which are seventeen children, and one widow, and I was much delighted to see the regularity wherewith it was managed. I gave Mr. Boltzius, one of their ministers, some of my poor's store for his orphans. He called them all before him, catechised and exhorted them to give God thanks for his good providence towards them; then prayed with them, and made them pray after him; then sung a psalm; and, afterwards, the little lambs came and shook me by the hand one by one. So we parted, and I scarce was ever better pleased in my life.²

Thus fired with enthusiasm for the establishment of his proposed orphanage in Georgia, Whitefield left Savannah on August 28, 1738, for Charleston where he sailed for England the following September 8. There were three reasons why he returned to his homeland so quickly after arriving in Georgia. First, he planned to solicit financial support in England for the erection of the orphanage. Second, since he had not yet been ordained a priest in the Church of England, he hoped to have this rite performed by Bishop Benson of Gloucester. Third, he wished to use his influence among the Trustees of Georgia in altering their established policies regarding land-ownership,

¹Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M. A., Vol. III, page 464

²Whitefield, G., Journals, edited by W. Wale, page 153

slavery, and ardent spirits (see page 87).

In England, the Trustees received Whitefield cordially and expressed their satisfaction in the reports which they had received of his labors in the colony. In accordance with requests made by the magistrates and inhabitants of Georgia, they offered him the parish of Savannah; furthermore, they granted him five hundred acres of land as a site for the orphanage.³ Whitefield accepted these generous offers; then on January 14, 1739 he was ordained a priest by Bishop Benson and soon thereafter made plans to return to Georgia.

On January 10, 1740, he landed at Savannah and plunged immediately into orphan house business. William Stephens, Esq., in his Journal of the Proceedings in Georgia, published in 1742, tells of his meeting with Whitefield on January 11:

Mr. Whitefield gave to me a document relating to the land on which to build his Orphan House. I told him that Mr. Habersham had already applied to General Oglethorpe, when he was at Savannah, and that the general had ordered five hundred acres to be run out, and had signed a warrant for this; and that, accordingly, Mr. Habersham had taken possession of the five hundred acres, and begun fencing and clearing it.

The "Mr. Habersham" referred to above is James Habersham who came to Georgia with Whitefield in 1738. At first he served as general assistant to Whitefield in Georgia and later as manager of the Orphan House. This comparatively humble man rose to considerable distinction, finally being elevated to the office of governor of the province of Georgia.⁴

Upon learning that Habersham had begun clearing and fencing the Orphan House land, Whitefield immediately set out to visit the site, ten miles from Savannah. He was pleased to find that Habersham had not only cleared and fenced some of the land, but had also stocked it with cattle and poultry, and

³Gillies, J., Memoirs of the Life of the Reverend George Whitefield, M.A., Chapter IV

⁴Dictionary of American Biography, Vol. III, pages 68 and 69

had built a hut.⁵

By January 29, 1740, Whitefield had received twenty orphan children into his "family" which he housed temporarily in Savannah. On this date he accepted three German orphans, making a total of twenty-three children under his care.

On January 30, he went with the carpenters and surveyor and laid out the ground where the Orphan House was to be built. The plan for "the great house" specified a two and a half story structure resting upon a brick foundation sixty feet long, forty feet wide. Three small houses were also planned: one for an infirmary, one for a work-house, and a still-house for the apothecary.

On March 25, 1740, Whitefield laid the first brick of "the great house" which he called "Bethesda". By this time, nearly forty children had been accepted; counting the workmen and all he had nearly a hundred to be fed daily.⁶ While in England he had collected £ 1040 for the orphans, but most of this fund was soon expended; only £ 150 remained when construction of the Orphan House was begun.

The need for funds was urgent; so early in April, 1740, Whitefield set out to the northern colonies where he preached and collected money for the orphanage. From April 14 to 23 he visited Philadelphia and its immediate neighborhood where the people responded generously to his appeal for contributions to the Orphan House. For example, on one Sunday in Philadelphia he received offerings at both his morning and evening preaching services that totaled £ 190.⁷

⁵Whitefield, G., Journals, edited by W. Wale, page 392

⁶Gillies, J., Op.Cit., Chapter V

⁷Seward, W., Journal, page 5

Whitefield remained in the northern colonies for nine weeks; and, when he returned to Savannah on June 5, 1740, he had collected £ 500 sterling for his orphans and brought a bricklayer, a tailor, and two maidservants to help in the work, and two little girls to add to his "family".⁸

The entire responsibility for Bethesda rested upon the shoulders of its founder. It had no official sponsorship either by church or state. The crown had given the five hundred acres of land upon which it was built, but no state financial support was forthcoming. Individuals of integrity had encouraged him in its founding, but none of these guaranteed anything beyond moral assistance. Bethesda's policies, prosperity, and growth were Whitefield's problems and his alone. He gladly assumed full responsibility; in fact, he rejoiced that he was counted worthy to do this work for his Master. There is nowhere in his writings any expression of regret regarding his ambitious undertaking. His journals and letters are sprinkled with the names, "Bethesda" and "Orphan House" and consistently reflect his deep love for the work being done there.

The only means whereby he could support the orphan children, their teachers, and servants was to solicit contributions from the thousands who heard him preach the gospel in America and the British Isles. He, therefore, presented this cause throughout the colonies and abroad, and usually the response was gratifying.

Benjamin Franklin, with a delightful touch of humor, described Whitefield's ability to extract money from his audiences. It is not surprising that this has become one of the most popular of the Whitefield anecdotes:

⁸Whitefield, G., Journals, edited by W. Wale, page 425.

Returning northward, he preach'd up this charity (the Orphan House), and made large collections, for his eloquence had a wonderful power over the hearts and purses of his hearers, of which I myself was an instance.

I did not disapprove of the design; but, as Georgia was then destitute of materials and workmen, and it was proposed to send them from Philadelphia at great expense, I thought it would have been better to have built the house at Philadelphia, and to have brought the children to it. This I advised; but he was resolute in his first project, and rejected my counsel; and I, therefore, refused to contribute. I happened soon after to attend one of his sermons, in the course of which I perceived he intended to finish with a collection; and I silently resolved he should get nothing from me. I had, in my pocket, a handful of copper money, three or four silver dollars, and five pistoles in gold. As he proceeded, I began to soften, and concluded to give the copper. Another stroke of his oratory determined me to give the silver; and he finished so admirably that I emptied my pocket wholly into the collector's dish, gold and all. At this sermon, there was also one of our club, who, being of my sentiments respecting the building in Georgia, and suspecting a collection might be intended, emptied his pockets before he came from home. Towards the conclusion of the discourse, however, he felt a strong inclination to give, and applied to a neighbor, who stood near him, to lend him money for the purpose. The request was fortunately made to, perhaps, the only man in the company who had the firmness not to be effected by the preacher. His answer was, 'At any other time, friend Hopkinson, I would lend thee freely, but not now, for thee seems to me to be out of thy right senses.'⁹

By Christmas, 1740, the orphans had been moved from their temporary quarters in a hired house in Savannah to Bethesda. They took up lodgings in the small houses while "the great house" was being completed. "The great house" contained sixteen rooms and a large cellar, and had a high roof with a belfry at the top. The floor plan was as follows: On the ground floor, the entrance hall was a chapel; on the left was the library and behind it the orphans' dining room, on the right, Mr. Whitefield's two parlors, with the stairway between them. On the second and third floors were Mr. Whitefield's study and his bedroom, the manager's bedroom, two bedrooms for the boys and the same for the girls, and five other rooms for general use. It was indeed

⁹Franklin, B., Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, pages 119-120.

a handsome structure standing in the midst of twenty acres of cleared land. In front were a peach orchard and the gardens, and behind it was Salt Water Creek; extending right and left was the Orphan House estate consisting of five hundred acres. A wide road was constructed from Savannah to the Orphan House; this was the longest and finest road attempted since the colony had been settled.

The construction of such an elaborate institution in the undeveloped province of Georgia, far removed from the source of supply for building materials, was not only difficult but expensive. By December, 1741, the Orphan House had cost £ 3,358 7s. 5½d. Toward this amount, Whitefield had received in England and America £ 2,530 2s. 9d., leaving a deficit of £ 828 4s. 8½d.¹⁰

In 1741 Whitefield had forty-nine orphan children under his care at Bethesda; twenty-three were English, ten were Scots, four Dutch, five French, and seven Americans. Twenty-two of these were fatherless and motherless, sixteen boys and six girls. Of the others, some were fatherless and some motherless, but all were objects of charity except three whose friends recompensed the Orphan House for their maintenance.

In addition to these forty-nine orphans, eighteen more children were maintained occasionally during 1741 as an assistance to poor parents. Bethesda was, therefore, not only extended its hospitality to orphans but also to children of poverty stricken parents. In this respect, though on a small scale, Whitefield endeavoured to imitate the orphanage of Professor Franck, at Hall, in Germany.

¹⁰Tyerman, L., The Life Of The Rev. George Whitefield, Vol.I, page 444.

During this time Whitefield employed nine assistants at Bethesda including schoolmasters, schoolmistresses, a superintendent and business manager, a surgeon, and a shoemaker. In addition to these, there were twenty or more laborers and monthly hired servants. In all, including children, assistants, servants, and laborers, there were nearly eighty persons living at the Orphan House.

What was the daily schedule established by Whitefield for the children under his care? This question can be answered from a pamphlet entitled, "The Manner of the Children's spending their time at the Orphan House in Georgia." It appears that the children had to rise every morning at the very early hour of five o'clock and were directed to spend their first fifteen minutes in private prayer. At six, all the family assembled in the chapel where a psalm was sung and the lesson for the morning was expounded by Whitefield, or, if he were absent, in lieu of the exposition, the manager read Burkitt's or Matthew Henry's notes. At seven, Ken's morning hymn was sung, extempore prayer offered, and breakfast served. From eight to ten, the children performed manual tasks such as carding, spinning, picking cotton, sewing, knitting, cleaning house, fetching water, or cutting wood. At ten, all went to school, some to reading, and some to writing. Lunch was served at noon. From two to four, the children returned to their school work, and from four to six to manual tasks. Supper was served at six. All the family assembled at seven in the chapel where a service was held similar to that at six in the morning. At eight, Whitefield catechised the children on the Church of England's Articles. At nine, they had refreshments and prepared for bed; each child engaged in private devotions for a quarter of an

hour. On Sundays, there were four public services of worship; only essential work was performed and the family dined on cold meat.

One of the fundamental principles of the Orphan House was to train the children for useful occupations. In reference to the work done by girls, Whitefield wrote:

Two or three of them spin very well. Some of them knit, wash, and clean the house, and get up the linen, and are taught housewifery. All capable are taught to sew; and the little girls, as well as the boys, are employed in picking cotton. I think I have no less than three hundred and eighty-two yards of cloth already in the house, and as much yarn spun as will make the same quantity.¹¹

Careful attention was also given to each boy; his talents and inclinations were determined, and, if possible, he was then assigned as an apprentice in a work proper for him. By January, 1741, one boy had become an apprentice to a bricklayer, one to a carpenter, and another to the surgeon at Bethesda. One worked at a loom at home; two were assigned to the tailor, and the rest were fitting themselves in other ways to be useful to the commonwealth. Whitefield intended under God to lead into the ministry those who appeared to have good natural capacity and were fully consecrated to the Lord.

In "An Account of the Money received and disbursed for the Orphan House in Georgia," published in London in 1741, Whitefield states that criticism concerning the management of the children at Bethesda had been made both in America and in England. This attack must have originated with those who had no first-hand knowledge of the Orphan House affairs. One man was filled with such resentment at the reports he had heard of cruelty to the children that he came from South Carolina to take away his

¹¹Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M.A., Vol. III, page 432.

boys, whom Whitefield, out of compassion, had received into his family. When, however, the father arrived and saw the manner in which his boys were being educated, he not only was content to leave them there, but also wanted to come and live at the Orphan House himself. Whitefield added, "I speak not this by way of boasting, or to wipe off reproach; for I know, let me do what I will, I shall never please natural men."

Unfortunately, this was not the only attack that was made against Whitefield and his work for children. His enemies spread the word that he was using the Orphan House as a pretense to accumulate personal wealth and that very little of the money contributed ever accomplished its intended purpose. These rumors seemed to spread everywhere, and by 1746, affidavits had been made in New England that the institution did not exist.

To silence such accusations, Whitefield and Habersham appeared before Henry Parker and William Spencer, bailiffs of Savannah, to whom they submitted the Orphan House ledger and swore that the book contained "a just and true account of all the moneys collected by or given to them, or any other, for the use and benefit of the said House; and that the disbursements had been faithfully applied to and for the use of the same. Whitefield further swore that "he had not converted or applied any part thereof to his own private use and property, neither had he charged the said House with any of his travelling, or any other private expenses whatever."

Then William Woodroffe, William Ewen, and William Russel, of Savannah, appeared before the same bailiffs, and swore that they had "carefully and strictly examined all and singular the accounts relating to the Orphan House, contained in forty-one pages, in a book entitled 'Receipts and Disbursements for the Orphan House in Georgia'; and had also carefully and strictly examined the original bills, receipts, and other vouchers, from the 15th of December,

1738, to the 1st of January, 1746;" and found "that the moneys received on account of the said Orphan House amounted to the sum of £ 4,982 12s. 8d. sterling, and that it did not appear that the Reverend Mr. Whitefield had converted any part thereof to his own private use and property, or charged the said House with any of his travelling or other private expense; but, on the contrary, had contributed to the said House many valuable benefactions." The three auditors further swore, "that the moneys disbursed on account of the said House amounted to the sum of £ 5,511 17s. 9½d. sterling, all of which appeared to have been faithfully and justly applied to and for the use and benefit of the said House only."

To the two affidavits, the substance of which is given above, the bailiffs added:

Sworn this 16th day of April, 1746, before us bailiffs of Savannah; in justification whereof we have hereunto fixed our hands, and the common seal.

Henry Parker
William Spencer.¹²

Whitefield acted wisely in submitting his accounts to official auditors. It was the only way to silence the falsehoods of his enemies; moreover, his friends were entitled to an official account in the form of an audit and magisterial declaration. After this, no one could reasonably dispute the existence of the Orphan House or doubt Whitefield's honesty.

It is a pity that Whitefield's integrity was ever questioned. If everyone had had the same faith in him as Benjamin Franklin, it would never have happened. In later years, in reference to Whitefield, Franklin wrote:

I, who was intimately acquainted with him, (being employed in printing his sermons, journals, etc.) never had the least suspicion of his integrity; but am, to this day, decidedly of

¹²Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M.A., Vol. III, pages 487-488

opinion that he was, in all his conduct, a perfectly honest man. Our friendship was sincere on both sides, and lasted to his death.¹³

This was the beginning of Whitefield's having his accounts periodically audited and properly recorded. During his lifetime the results of these examinations showed that: On April 16, 1746, up to that date, he had expended £ 5,511 17s. 9½d., and had received £ 4,982 12s. 8d., leaving a deficit of £ 529 5s. 1¼d. From that date to February 25, 1752, he expended £ 2,026 13s. 7½d. and received £ 1,386 8s. 7½d., creating another deficit of £ 640 5s. From February 25, 1752 to February 19, 1755, he spent £ 1,966 18s. 2d., towards which he received £ 1,289 2s. 3d., leaving a third deficit of £ 677 15s. 11d. From February 19, 1755 to February 9, 1765, Whitefield had expended the sum of £ 3,349 15s. 10d., and had received £ 3,132 16s. 0½d., thus he had paid out of his own funds the amount of £ 216 19s. 9¾d. From February 9, 1765, to February 2, 1770, the debit side of the record showed £ 2,548 17s. 0½d., and the credit side £ 1,313 19s. 6¾d., costing Whitefield £ 1,234 17s. 5¼d.

When the above amounts are added, it will be seen that for thirty years of operation the Orphan House had cost £ 15,404 2s. 5¼d., and of this amount £ 12,104 19s. 1¼d. had been received through gifts and subscriptions. The difference between these two figures represents the financial contribution which Whitefield had personally made to the Orphan House over the thirty-year period. Thus, his total monetary gift amounted to £ 3,299 3s. 3¾d.! On February 2, 1770, James Edward Powell and Grey Elliot, auditors, swore to the accuracy of these figures in their report and to the fact that clear and distinct vouchers for the whole amount of the sums expended had been laid before them, except for four articles amounting together to £ 40 1s. 1d., and the particulars of this

¹³Franklin, B., Op. Cit., page 120

expense were fully explained and found valid.¹⁴

It is interesting to note the sources from which the total amount of contributions came for the thirty years of maintenance. The following display of receipts is taken from the Orphan House's authenticated book:¹⁵

| <u>Receipts</u> | <u>£</u> | <u>s.</u> | <u>d.</u> |
|---|----------|-----------|-----------|
| Benefactions and Collections in England | 4471 | 0 | 6 1/4 |
| Ditto, in Scotland | 978 | 2 | 5 1/2 |
| Ditto, in Georgia | 275 | 5 | 7 1/2 |
| Ditto, in Charleston | 567 | 1 | 9 3/4 |
| Ditto, in Beaufort | 16 | 10 | 7 |
| Ditto, in Boston, New York Philadelphia, etc. | 1809 | 6 | 10 1/2 |
| Ditto, in Lisbon | 3 | 12 | 0 |
| Cash received for payment of boarders, cocoons, rice, lumber, indigo, provisions, etc. | 3983 | 19 | 3 |
| The Reverend Mr. Whitefield's benefactions, being the sums expended more than received | 3299 | 3 | 3 3/4 |
| | £ 15,404 | 2 | 5 1/4 |

On December 18, 1764, Whitefield petitioned his Excellency James Wright, Governor of the province of Georgia and the members of His Majesty's Council of the province of Georgia to grant him in trust two thousand acres of land for the purpose of expanding the Orphan House into a college. As he saw the colony growing in population and influence, Whitefield indulged the idea of providing higher education at Bethesda for the young men of Georgia who desired it. There was little doubt as to the need for a college in Georgia. The province was now flourishing, and many families sent their sons to northern provinces for advanced studies but would much rather have had them educated nearer home. Considerable sums of money were thus carried out of the province, and there was always the risk that the affections of these young students would be alienated

¹⁴

Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M.A., Vol. III, page 489.

¹⁵Ibid, Vol. III, page 492.

from their native home. Whitefield forcibly pointed out these reasons for the college which he proposed in his petition. Two days after the date of Whitefield's petition, both Houses of the Georgia Assembly heartily endorsed his proposal, granted the two thousand acres of land requested, and commended Whitefield for his singular benefaction through the years.

Since the prohibition of slavery in Georgia had been repealed by the Trustees of Georgia in 1749, Whitefield anticipated the purchase of a large number of Negroes to cultivate all lands held by the Orphan House as well as the two thousand acres just acquired. He planned to use the profits from this endeavor to support his proposed college, especially its faculty which would consist of a president, professors, and tutors.

Whitefield returned to England in 1765 and remained there until November, 1769; during these years he exerted his utmost effort to accomplish the conversion of the Orphan House into a college, but various circumstances impeded the fulfillment of his plan. He delivered a suitable petition to the Clerk of his Majesty's Privy Council; his petition was transmitted to the Lord President who in turn submitted it to the consideration of the Archbishop of Canterbury. Then on June 17, 1767, Whitefield commenced a correspondence with the Archbishop of Canterbury; this correspondence proved entirely fruitless and finally ended February 12, 1768. Having failed in England to secure official sanction of his plan, Whitefield wished to lay an account of the whole transaction before the Governor of Georgia, the Council and Assembly of Georgia, and all the American colonists. His account was published in May, 1768, with the title, "A Letter to his Excellency Governor Wright, giving an Account of the Steps taken relative to the converting the Georgia Orphan House into a College; together with the Literary Correspondence that passed upon the Subject between his Grace the

Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Reverend Mr. Whitefield, to which also is annexed the Plan and Elevation of the present and intended Buildings, and Orphan House Lands adjacent."¹⁶

The extensive correspondence thus laid before the public shows that the Archbishop, before approving the charter which Whitefield proposed, sought to make "judicious corrections." One change that he desired to make was that the president of the college should be a member or minister of the Church of England; another was that the charter should provide for the daily use of the liturgy of the Church of England, and that doctrines to be taught should be specified. Whitefield stood resolute against these changes, not because he did not hold the Church of England in the highest regard, but because he had secured funds from people of various and sundry denominations for his Orphanage and could not therefore agree to the Church of England's control. He states that since the announcement of the design to turn the Orphan House into a college, he had visited most of the places where the benefactors of the Orphan House resided, and had frequently been asked, "Upon what bottom the College was to be founded?" To these inquiries he had answered and even declared from the pulpit, that "it should be upon a broad bottom, and no other." Whitefield concluded the correspondence with the Archbishop by saying that as the influence of his Grace, and of the Lord President, "will undoubtedly extend itself to others of His Majesty's Most Honourable Privy Council," he would not trouble them again about the business, but would himself "turn the charity into a more generous and extensively useful channel,"

¹⁶Ibid., Vol. III, pages 472-486.

Also included in the correspondence which Whitefield made public in 1768 was the following statement addressed to James Wright, governor of the province of Georgia:

Thus, may it please your Excellency, concluded my correspondence with his Grace; and, I humbly hope, the Province of Georgia will, in the end, be no loser by this negotiation. For, I now purpose to superadd a public academy to the Orphan House, as the College of Philadelphia was constituted a public academy, as well as charitable school, for some time before its present college charter was granted in 1755.¹⁷

Thus it is clear that Whitefield, having failed in his effort to convert the Orphan House into a college, next entertained the desire of adding an academy to it. He felt that in this way Bethesda would not only be continued as a house of mercy for orphans, but would be confirmed as a seat and nursery of sound learning and religious education. He explained that he intended to staff the academy with qualified teachers from England who would "prepare for academical honours the many youths in Georgia and adjacent provinces waiting for admission."

Although Whitefield was now pressing for an academy, it should not be assumed that he had entirely surrendered the idea of converting the Orphan House into a college. He concluded his report by expressing his willingness to convey the whole Orphan House estate to trustees with the understanding that no opportunity should be neglected "of making fresh application for a college charter, upon a broad bottom, whenever those in power might think it for the glory of God, and the interest of their king and country, to grant the same."¹⁸

John Wesley wrote to Whitefield from Lewisham on February 21, 1770, expressing his disapproval of any plan which would divert the orphanage from its original design. Wesley's letter, though at variance with Whitefield's best

¹⁷Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M.A., Vol. III, page 484.

¹⁸The Orphan House estate was not transferred into the hands of trustees during Whitefield's life.

judgment in the matter, was written in a courteous manner and was the last that Whitefield ever received from his fellow minister and friend.

In a letter written to Robert Keen dated February 10, 1770, Whitefield states that the governor of Georgia had agreed to support all legislation necessary to convert the Orphan House into a "college", or, to speak more accurately, an academy. Whitefield explained, however, that he would shortly embark on a preaching tour of the northern colonies, and that on his return to Georgia, the matters concerning the academy would be settled.¹⁹ The would-be founder of Bethesda Academy made his trip into the northern colonies, but never returned to Georgia; death overtook him September 30, 1770.

By his will, Whitefield bequeathed the Orphan House, all land attached to it, and all Negroes in his possession to the Countess of Huntingdon for the same purpose as he himself held them. By the time of Whitefield's death, the land held by the Orphan House was considerable as it included: the tract of 500 acres, called Bethesda, on which the Orphan House was erected; another of 419 acres, called Nazareth; a third tract of 419 acres, called Ephratah, on which were the principal planting improvements; and a fourth of 500 acres, adjoining Ephratah, called Huntingdon; besides these, there were three other tracts, amounting to 2,000 acres.

The Countess of Huntingdon, in accepting the difficult responsibility of supervising Orphan House affairs, determined to send two ministers from England to serve the institution as president and master. She also arranged for a group of Trevecca College students to be commissioned as missionaries to the Indians and to the people in the back settlements of Georgia. The

¹⁹Gillies, J., Op. Cit., Chapter XX

missionaries were welcomed by the people of Savannah, and for a while it appears that the Orphan House prospered.²⁰

Bethesda's prosperity came to a sudden halt when in June, 1773, the Orphan House ^{was} burned. Francis Asbury, one of Wesley's missionaries, wrote:

New York, July 2, 1773. Arrived the sorrowful news of the destruction of Mr. Whitefield's Orphan House. As there was no fire in the house, it was supposed to have been set on fire by lightening. The fire broke out about seven or eight o'clock at night, and consumed the whole building, except the two wings.²¹

(Although it is not necessarily within the scope of this thesis, it is interesting, particularly to a Georgian, to trace the history of this property and the continuation of Bethesda as an institution from the time the Orphan House burned to the present day.)

In 1782, during the war with England, the Americans confiscated the Orphan House estates. In 1800, when a Methodist preacher visited there, the two unburnt wings were fast decaying. In one of them, a small family of white people lived; and, in the other a family of Negro slaves. The brick walls which formerly enclosed the Orphan House premises were leveled with the ground, and in many places, the foundations were ploughed up. There was no school of any kind; and the whole property was rented for thirty dollars a year.²²

Early in the nineteenth century, the Orphan House was rebuilt but not upon the original site. Joseph S. Fry, during the time he was president of the institution, succeeded in rebuilding the orphanage upon the old site. Then in

²⁰ Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. II, page 584.

²¹ Asbury, F., Journal, Vol. I, page 76

²² Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. II, page 585

1870 a new building was begun which was the fourth since Whitefield's original Bethesda.²³

The Savannah Home for Girls was founded in 1801; since that time, Bethesda had restricted its work to boys and, therefore, bears the name, "Bethesda Home For Boys." The institution is located on the same tract of land granted Whitefield originally by the trustees of the colony of Georgia. Not only are orphan and half-orphan boys accepted, but also victims of desertion and broken homes. They are received between the ages of six and twelve and are maintained until they are old enough to go into employment or until relatives are able to provide for them.

Slavery

Since Whitefield did not maintain an absolute position towards slavery, but varied in his attitude and expression according to the circumstances of various localities, his relationship to slavery can best be presented in the following four sections: The Question of Slavery in Georgia, Criticism of Slave-owners in Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, The Proposed School for Negroes in Pennsylvania, and Slave Labor to Support Bethesda Orphan House.

The Question of Slavery in Georgia

King George II signed the Charter of the Colony of Georgia on June 9, 1732. The twenty men who petitioned for the land grant were styled "Trustees for Establishing the Colony of Georgia in America." They were empowered to ordain laws and regulations for the government of the colony, to appoint a

²³Gledstone, J. P., George Whitefield, Field Preacher, page 516.

governor, establish courts, transport settlers, and distribute the land to immigrants. General Oglethorpe was the only Trustee who ever came to Georgia; the others remained in London and transacted the business of the colony as best they could through written orders and correspondence.

The primary purpose of the founding of Georgia was to provide a sanctuary for the poverty stricken, debt burdened people of England.²⁴ Georgia was also to serve as a buffer colony between South Carolina to the north and the Indians and Spaniards to the south. Furthermore, it was hoped that in time the colony would produce silk and grapes and thus be of commercial profit.

Equipped with a charter, giving them full rights to organize a colony, the Trustees began to hold meetings in July, 1732. Seeking to provide a fresh opportunity in life for men who had failed, the Trustees bore the expense of transporting the immigrants from England to America and furnished everything necessary to begin farming including land, tools, and even provisions for a year. The immigrants were expected, however, to do their farm work themselves; the Trustees, therefore prohibited the practice of slavery. Likewise, they prohibited the introduction of ardent spirits such as rum, gin, and whiskey, contending that the use of these intoxicants would tend to encourage idleness. They adopted rigid rules regarding ownership and inheritance of land. A limit of fifty acres was set for each man who went to Georgia at the expense of the Trust. Anyone who went at his own expense and carried as many as ten white servants was allowed five hundred acres. In no case was complete ownership of the land given to the settler. He had possession during his life, but was prohibited from selling, mortgaging or giving away his land, and at his death,

²⁴It later proved to be a place of refuge for persecuted people from France, Germany, and Scotland, as well.

his eldest son inherited the property. If there were no male heirs, the property went back to the Trust.

With these regulations in force, a group of one hundred and fourteen immigrants, men, women, and children landed at Charleston, South Carolina, on January 13, 1733, and proceeded southward to the spot selected by Oglethorpe for planting the new colony.

In 1733, when this first group of English settlers arrived in Georgia, the neighboring colony of South Carolina was in a flourishing state. The slave system was fully employed there, for then there were twenty-two thousand Negro slaves and only seven thousand three hundred and thirty-three white people; thus, the Negroes outnumbered the whites three to one. The white colonists could own unlimited tracts of land and were at liberty to import and manufacture all manner of intoxicants.²⁵

With these facts in mind, it is not surprising that some of the inhabitants of Georgia soon became resentful of the prohibitions which the Trustees of their colony had adopted. They felt, regardless of the benevolent social design envisioned for Georgia, that they as colonists were handicapped if not discriminated against by the established policy. As early as 1736, "several of the better sort of people in Savannah" had sent a petition to the Trustees "for the use of negroes."

General Oglethorpe and William Stephens reported to the Trustees that it was only the most worthless and idle element that desired Negroes, and this opinion was apparently sustained by the fact that the German people at Ebenezer and the Scots at Darien petitioned against the introduction of slaves. These people, however, were accustomed to hard manual toil, but the Savannah people

²⁵Brooks, R. P., History of Georgia, pages 42 through 62.

came from the trading and professional classes of England, and were unfitted for agricultural labor in the hot climate of Georgia.

During his first visit to Georgia in 1738, Whitefield became acquainted with the problems of the colony, and found that he was sympathetic with the citizens of Savannah who felt that Georgia's future prosperity was impossible as long as it remained an exception among the American colonies in the matter of slave labor. One of the reasons for his sudden departure to England on August 28, 1738, was to use his influence in altering the policy which the Trustees had established. Whitefield stated his position as follows:

The people were denied the use of both rum and slaves. The lands were allotted them according to a particular plan, whether good or bad; and the female heirs were prohibited from inheriting. So that in reality to place people there, on such a footing, was little better than to tie their legs and bid them walk. The scheme was well meant at home; but was absolutely impracticable in so hot a country abroad.²⁶

For a number of years, the Trustees refused to listen to any petitions or resolutions on the subject of changing the established policy for Georgia. They had definitely decided never to allow slavery, and this determination was weakened only when they realized that without it the colony would be depopulated.

With every passing year, it became harder to make a living, and finally the people of Ebenezer and Darien, the Germans and the Scots, joined with the other colonists in petitioning for Negroes. The case of the colonists was strongly expressed by James Habersham who maintained that unless the law was changed the colony would not survive. In 1748, the Rev. John Martin Bolzius, pastor of the Germans at Ebenezer, who had been a strong upholder of the views of the Trustees, saw fit to write them:

²⁶Gillies, J., Op. Cit., Chapter III

Things being now in such a melancholy state, I must humbly beseech your honors not to regard any more our or our friends' petitions against negroes.

By 1739, the desire in Georgia to have Negro slaves was practically unanimous. The Trustees, therefore, removed the restriction, and thus a system of labor was introduced which brought many important consequences with it.²⁷

Criticism of Slave-owners in Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina

On his second visit to America, Whitefield landed at Lewis Town, one hundred and fifty miles from Philadelphia, on October 30, 1739. During the following December, he traveled southward on horseback toward Georgia. As he proceeded through Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, he was careful to observe the slave labor system of these colonies. His impressions were unfavorable, and after he reached Savannah, he wrote a lengthy letter to the inhabitants of these colonies; Benjamin Franklin printed the letter at his New Printing Office, near the Market, Philadelphia. The more pertinent part of this communication is as follows:

As I lately passed through your provinces in my way hither, I was sensibly touched with a fellow-feeling of the miseries of the poor negroes. Could I have preached more frequently amongst you, I should have delivered my thoughts in my public discourses; but as my business here required me to stop as little as possible on the road, I have no other way to discharge the concern which at present lies upon my heart, than by sending you this letter: How you will receive it I know not; whether you will accept it in love, or be offended with me, as the master of the damsel was with Paul, for casting the evil spirit out of her, when he saw the hope of his gain was gone, I am uncertain. Whatever be the event, I must inform you in the meekness and gentleness of Christ, that I think God has a

²⁷Brooks, R. P., Op. Cit., pages 65 through 67.

quarrel with you for your abuse of and cruelty to the poor negroes. Whether it be lawful for Christians to buy slaves, and thereby encourage the nations from whom they are bought, to be at perpetual war with each other, I shall not take upon me to determine; sure I am that it is sinful, when bought, to use them as bad, nay worse, than as though they were brutes; and whatever particular exceptions there may be (as I would charitably hope there are some) I fear the generality of you that own negroes, are liable to such a charge; for your slaves, I believe work as hard if not harder than the horses whereon you ride.

These after they have done their work, are fed and taken proper care of; but many negroes when wearied with labour in your plantations, have been obliged to grind their own corn after they return home.

Your dogs are caress'd and fondled at your tables; but your slaves, who are frequently stiled dogs or beasts, have not an equal privilege. They are scarce permitted to pick up the crumbs which fall from their masters' tables. Nay, some as I have been informed by an eye-witness, have been, upon the most trifling provocation, cut with knives, and had forks thrown into their flesh--not to mention what numbers have been given up to the inhuman usage of cruel task masters, who by their unrelenting scourges have ploughed upon their backs, and made long furrows, and at length brought them even to death itself.

It's true, I hope there are but few such monsters of barbarity suffered to subsist amongst you. Some, I hear, have been lately executed in Virginia for killing slaves, and the laws are very severe against such who at any time murder them.

And perhaps it might be better for the poor creatures themselves, to be hurried out of life, than to be made so miserable, as they generally are in it. And indeed, considering what usage they commonly meet with, I have wondered, that we have not more instances of self-murder among the negroes, or that they have not more frequently rose up in arms against their owners. Virginia has once, and Charleston more than once been threatened in this way.

And tho' I heartily pray God they may never be permitted to get the upper hand; yet should such a thing be permitted by providence, all good men must acknowledge the judgment would be just. --For is it not the highest ingratitude, as well as cruelty, not to let your poor slaves enjoy some fruits of their labour?

When passing along, I have viewed your plantations cleared and cultivated, many spacious houses built, and the owners of them faring sumptuously every day, my blood has frequently run cold within me, to consider how many of your slaves had neither convenient food to eat or proper raiment to put on, notwithstanding most of the comforts you enjoy were solely owing to their indefatigable labours. The Scripture says, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn." Does God take care of oxen? And will He not take care of negroes? Undoubtedly He will. "Go to now, ye rich men, weep and howl for your miseries that shall come upon you." Behold, the provision of the poor negroes, which have reaped down your fields, which is by you denied them, "crieth, and the cries of them which have reaped are entered into the ears of the Lord of Sabaoth."²⁸

To write such a letter required boldness as well as conviction, and, as was to be expected, invoked the anger of slave-owners. It should be noted, however, that Whitefield did not condemn slavery itself as wicked or even un-Christian. The core of his thought is contained in a few lines near the beginning of the letter: "I think God has a quarrel with you, for your cruelty to the poor negroes. Whether it be lawful for Christians to buy slaves, I shall not take upon me to determine; but sure I am it is sinful when bought, to use them worse than brutes." Thus he denounced the cruel treatment of slaves, but not the practice of slavery itself. Indirectly, he made his plea for the exercise of kindness, gentleness, and patience towards the ignorant and unfortunate Negroes in these colonies.

The Proposed School for Negroes in Pennsylvania

Whitefield's sympathy for the Negroes of America was such that he envisioned a place of refuge and educational opportunity for as many as would be sent to him. He reasoned that such a home and school for Negroes should

²⁸Whitefield, G., Three Letters, (The last of these letters is written "to the inhabitants of Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina, concerning their Negroes.")

be located on a large plantation which if properly managed would amply support all who lived there.

There is no way of knowing how long he cherished the idea of establishing this institution, but the first action taken toward making it a reality occurred on April 22, 1740. Whitefield and his friend and fellow-traveler, William Seward, were together in Philadelphia on that date, and they agreed with a "Mr. Allen" to purchase five thousand acres of land on the forks of the Delaware for £ 2,200 sterling. Seward enthusiastically encouraged Whitefield in the project and guaranteed the money with which to buy the land.²⁹

Whitefield commissioned Peter Bohler and his Moravian band, who had settled near Savannah, to proceed northward to the newly acquired acreage, to build themselves houses there, and to cultivate some of the land. By May 30, 1740, Bohler and his companions had assembled on the property and begun work.

Meanwhile, Seward embarked for England; his principal task in the homeland was to arrange payment for the land and to instigate the taking of collections there for the project. During his voyage, he wrote a letter to Mr. Blackwell of London explaining his participation in the land purchase and instructing Mr. Blackwell to convert certain stocks into cash sufficient to pay for the tract of land in Pennsylvania. Following is an excerpt from his letter written June 9, 1740:

The land, by my desire, is conveyed to Brother Whitefield, but mortgaged to me by £ 2,200, the purchase-money. I think it is as good a security as the Bank of England, perhaps better; but you know we aim not at an earthly, but a heavenly inheritance. Still, we must provide things honest in the sight of all men.

²⁹Seward, W., Journal, page 20.

I desire to land at Dover or Deal, and to call at Elendon for one night or two at most; and, as I must raise money to answer the bills of exchange I have drawn for the sum aforesaid, I desire you, if you can conveniently, to sell for me £ 1,650 old South Sea annuities, and £ 585 4s. 5d. South Sea stock. If not convenient to you, desire Mr. Cole to do it; and (God willing) I shall be in town two or three days afterwards to sign the transfers.³⁰

Seward landed in England on June 19, and several months later went to Wales to join in the evangelistic efforts of Howell Harris, one of the most aggressive Dissenter ministers in that section of the country. The Dissenters were being bitterly persecuted at the time, and Seward met with brutal and tragic treatment. While preaching at Caerleon, he was "pelted with dung and dirt, eggs and plumbstones." During this abusive treatment, he received a facial blow which robbed him of his sight in one eye. Then at Hay, a man struck him so severely on the head, that, a few days afterwards, on October 22, 1740, he died at the early age of thirty-eight. When Whitefield heard of Seward's death, he gave up hope for the proposed school for Negroes, for there was no one to pay for the land which had been chosen as the site for this benevolent undertaking. Whitefield notified Bohler to abandon the project; later, however, the land was offered for sale to the Brethren. In 1743 the purchase was completed, and the Moravian settlement of Nazareth was established.³¹

Slave Labor To Support Bethesda Orphan House

In 1747, Whitefield, in his capacity as head of the Orphan House, became a slave-owner and planter! This is revealed in a letter which he wrote from Charleston, March 15, 1747, "to a generous benefactor unknown." He reported on the prosperity at Bethesda and the opening of his Latin school there and

³⁰Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. I, pages 378-379.

³¹Ibid., Vol. I, page 167.

expressed the hope that in the near future some ministers would be sent forth from the Orphan House. Then he stated that the inhabitants of Georgia were still forbidden to have slaves and that it was impossible for them to subsist without the use of slave labor. A group of South Carolina friends had, however, contributed liberally towards the purchase in their province of a plantation and slaves to be devoted to the support of Bethesda. He had made the purchase of "a plantation of six hundred and forty acres of excellent land; and one Negro had been given him, and he proposed to buy more within the week. An overseer had been put on the plantation, and he expected a sufficient quantity of food-stuffs to be raised that year to fulfill Bethesda's needs. He closed his letter expressing the hope that by this method of support Bethesda's future welfare might be assured:

I hope that God will still stir up the friends of Zion to help me, not only to discharge the arrears, but also to bring the plantation, lately purchased, to such perfection, that, if I should die shortly, Bethesda may yet be provided for.³²

Higher Education

The role which Whitefield played in the advancement of higher education in America is both impressive and surprising. He was the undisputed founder of the Charity School of Philadelphia (1740), which became the University of Pennsylvania. He was closely associated with the founding and subsequent success of both Princeton University, Princeton, New Jersey (1746), and Dartmouth College, Hanover, New Hampshire (1754). He was a patron of Harvard University, Cambridge, Massachusetts (1636) and received from its faculty a formal expression of appreciation for his services. Thus he was the founder of a university

³²Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M.A., Vol. II, pages 90-91.

and benefactor to three other major institutions of higher learning in America; this is an impressive record for any man and particularly for one whose time and talents were dedicated almost exclusively to itinerant preaching.

University of Pennsylvania

A private school was opened in Philadelphia as early as 1683 by Enoch Flower, a native of Wiltshire, who taught reading, writing, and casting accounts for eight shillings a quarter.

Soon, thereafter, the Pennsylvania Assembly authorized religious societies to acquire houses for schools and thus encouraged Christian groups to provide education for children.³³ The Society of Friends was the first group to take such a step and in 1689 established the first public school in Philadelphia.³⁴

By the time Whitefield first visited Philadelphia (November, 1739), the city had numerous private schools as well as the public school established and supported by the Society of Friends. Poor parents, however, could not afford to send their children to the private schools, and one public school could not possibly accommodate all the children who needed the benefits of a free education. Consequently, during his initial visits to Philadelphia, Whitefield maintained that it was the duty of Christian people to provide free education for all children whose parents could not afford to send them to private schools. His remarks on this subject were seriously considered and soon adopted, for the following advertisement was inserted in the July 20, 1740, issue of the

³³Thompson, William J., George Whitefield, Educator and University Founder, pages 347-348.

³⁴Wood, George B., Early History of University of Pennsylvania, pages 1-4.

Pennsylvania Gazette:

CHARITY SCHOOL

It has pleased Almighty God in his infinite goodness and mercy in these latter days to visit with his Holy Spirit the hearts and minds of many professing Christianity in this as well as diverse parts of the world however divided or distinguished in denomination or interest, so as to make them lay aside bigotry and party zeal and unite their endeavours to promote the truly noble interest of the Kingdom of the blessed Jesus.

With this view it hath been thought proper to erect a large building for a charity school for the instruction of poor children gratis in useful literature and the knowledge of the Christian religion and also for a house of public worship in this place being insufficient to contain the great numbers who convene on such occasions. And it being impracticable to meet in the open air at all times of the year because of the inclemency of the weather.

It is agreed that the use of the aforesaid school and house of worship be under the direction of certain trustees . . . which trustees before named and hereafter to be chosen are from time to time to appoint fit and able school masters and school mistresses and introduce such protestant ministers as they judge to be sound in principle acquainted with experimental religion in their own hearts and faithful in their practice without regard to those distinctions or different sentiments in lesser matters which have unhappily divided real Christians.

These are therefore to give notice to all charitable persons who are inclined to encourage the undertaking that the building is actually begun. . . . Materials for the building will be received as also subscriptions for money and work taken in by the underwritten persons.³⁵

Thus Whitefield's idea of providing free education for poor children was adopted by a sufficiently large number of Philadelphia citizens to effect the erection of a charity school building, 106 feet long and 74 feet wide. This is the same building which was erected to serve as a meeting-house where Whitefield (or any other itinerant minister) could conduct preaching services; the building, therefore, was intended to be used both as a charity school and as a house of worship.

³⁵Thompson, W.J., Op. Cit., pages 348-349

Whitefield's name was the first on the list of "Trustees for the Uses," and later he was commissioned by his fellow trustees to select the first teachers for the school.³⁶ In founding the Charity School of Philadelphia, Whitefield accomplished far more than he realized, for this small school finally became the great University of Pennsylvania. Let us follow the story of its evolution.

In 1743, Benjamin Franklin proposed an Academy for "compleat education for youth," but due to imminent war between England, Spain, and France, and threatened famine, his proposal was not then pursued. The idea was revived, however, in 1749 when Franklin endeavored to interest several of his friends in his favor, including: Thomas Hopkinson, Tench Francis, and the Rev. Richard Peters. Having secured their assistance, Franklin published his own "Proposals Relating to the Education of Youth in Pennsylvania," and circulated these extensively among the respectable inhabitants of the city. The proposals attracted much attention, and twenty-four of the most influential citizens met together and associated themselves into a Board of Trustees for the purpose of carrying the design into effect. They ruled that their services would be gratis and that the number of trustees would be kept at twenty-four, "never exceeded by any motion whatever." They borrowed £ 800 sterling on their own joint bond and with this fund in hand began work.³⁷

James Logan offered a building lot free, but it was declined in favor of the Charity School property as "in all respects better suited to their present circumstances and future views." Franklin and his Trustees, therefore, entered into negotiations with the Trustees of the Charity School. As a result, the

³⁶Ibid., page 351.

³⁷Wood, George B., Op. Cit., pages 6-7.

Trustees of the Charity School, "agreeable to their deed of trust," decided to convey their title to the Trustees of the Academy in trust for the uses and purposes of the Charity School's original deed expressed; among which was to "teach poor children gratis in useful literature and knowledge of the Christian religion." The title was duly conveyed to the Trustees of the Academy; consequently, the school which Whitefield founded in 1740 as the "Charity School" became in 1749, the "Charity School and Academy."

This was not the end of changes in its name; in 1753, it became "The College, Academy, and Charity School;" in 1779, "The University of the State of Pennsylvania;" in 1791, "The University of Pennsylvania." Thus from 1740 to the present, it has been called successively: school, academy, college, and university.

On June 6, 1899, the Trustees of the University of Pennsylvania unanimously resolved that "founded in 1740" be placed on all official publications. Thus this great American University acknowledged its birth in the Charity School of Philadelphia and George Whitefield as its founder.³⁸

A handsome statue of Whitefield has been erected in the dormitory court of the University of Pennsylvania; the following tributes are inscribed on its base:

The Reverend George Whitefield

Bachelor of Arts
1736
Pembroke College
Oxford

Zealous advocate and patron of higher education
in the American colonies. The Charity School of

³⁸Thompson, William J., Op. Cit., page 352.

1740, the beginning of the University of Pennsylvania, was a fruit of his ministry.

Humble disciple of Jesus Christ--
Eloquent Preacher of the Gospel.

"I knew him intimately upwards of thirty years. His integrity, disinterestedness and indefatigable zeal in prosecuting every good work, I have never seen equalled, and shall never see excelled."
Benjamin Franklin

The University of Pennsylvania held its first sessions in a building erected for his congregations, and was aided by his collections, guided by his counsel, inspired by his life.

In veneration of his memory this monument has been erected by alumni of this University who are ministers and laymen of the Methodist Church of which he was a founder.

Princeton University

The antecedent of Princeton University was the College of New Jersey, founded in 1746 and chartered in 1748. The institution can, however, be traced as far back as 1720 when the Rev. William Tennent organized a small school for the training of evangelical ministers of the gospel in Neshaminy, twenty miles north of Philadelphia.

Tennent, a native of Ireland, was graduated from the University of Edinburgh, ordained a minister in the Irish Established Church, and served as chaplain to an Irish nobleman. In 1718, he migrated to Pennsylvania with his wife, four sons, and a daughter, and applied to be received as a member of the Presbyterian Synod of Philadelphia. That body required him to state in writing the reason for his dissent from the Episcopal communion; his case was considered;

his credentials were found satisfactory, and he was admitted a member of the Synod and settled at Neshaminy.

Tennent had personally trained his eldest son, Gilbert, for the ministry before migrating to America. In Neshaminy, he built a log cabin to serve as a school, and there he trained his three sons, Charles, John, and William, as well as some twelve or fifteen other young men, for the ministry. He not only drilled his students in the languages, logic, and theology, but also imbued them with an extraordinary spirit which made them flaming evangelists.

The enthusiasm of these young men aroused opposition among the more conservative ministers, and the Synod of Philadelphia took action to restrain them. Later, the Synod split into two groups, one favoring revivalism, the other opposing it. The division finally resulted in the New Side party (as the revivalists were termed) being expelled from the Synod in 1741. Four years later, the New Side formed the Synod of New York.³⁹

Whitefield met the Tennent family during his second visit to America. At the invitation of William Tennent, he preached in Neshaminy on November 22, 1739, before about three thousand people gathered in the meeting-house yard. His journal entry on this date is devoted to an appreciative account of the work which the Tenments and their brethren were conducting in Neshaminy and neighboring communities; the following is a portion of that entry:

they intend breeding up gracious youths, and sending them out into our Lord's vineyard. The place wherein the young men study now is, in contempt, called "the College." It is a log-house, about twenty feet long, and nearly as many broad; and, to me, it seemed to resemble the school of the old prophets. From this despised place, seven or eight worthy ministers of Jesus have lately been sent forth;

³⁹Sweet, W. W., Methodism in American History, pages 16-17.

more are almost ready to be sent; and a foundation is now laying for the instruction of many others. The devil will certainly rage against them; but the work, I am persuaded is of God, and will not come to nought. Carnal ministers oppose them strongly; and, because people, when awakened by Mr. Tennent or his brethren, see through them, and therefore leave their ministry, the poor gentlemen are loaded with contempt, and looked upon as persons who turn the world upside-down.⁴⁰

William Tennent rendered an enormous contribution to the revival of religion in America by training his sons and other zealous young men for the ministry. He died in 1746, but the spirit of his log-college was not allowed to die with him. In less than six months after his death, the New York Synod founded the College of New Jersey upon the evangelical principles which Tennent has practiced for twenty-six years in Neshaminy in preparing young men for the ministry.⁴¹ Thus the New Side Presbyterians guaranteed themselves a training center for revivalistic ministers.

Whitefield was intensely interested in the New Jersey College, and contributed valuable assistance in raising funds for its establishment and maintenance.

Thinking that financial aid might be found in Scotland, he wrote the following to Rev. Ebenezer Pemberton, a minister in New York, on November 21, 1748:

I have been endeavouring in Scotland, to do all the service I could to the New Jersey College; but I believe nothing will be done to purpose, unless you or some other popular minister come over, and make an application in person. In all probability, a collection might then be recommended by

⁴⁰Whitefield, G., Journals, edited by W. Wale, page 351

⁴¹Sweet, W.W., Religion in Colonial America, pages 280-281

the General Assembly, and large contributions be raised among private persons who wish well to Zion.⁴²

In 1750, when "Mr. Allen and Colonel Williams" came to England on behalf of the College, Whitefield presented them to the Countess of Huntingdon. The Governor of New Jersey, Jonathan Belcher, who had been instrumental in the founding of the College, had undertaken to present the ideals and policies of the institution in written form; this was printed and distributed in England with an endorsement by the Countess of Huntingdon, Whitefield, Dr. Doddridge,⁴³ and others. On numerous occasions, Whitefield received collections for the College; and, in the course of a few months, considerable sums were collected and transmitted to America.

Extracts from two of Whitefield's letters reflect his interest in the college in 1750. To Governor Belcher, he wrote:

Portsmouth, April 27, 1750

I am glad your Excellency has been honoured, by Providence, to put New Jersey College on such a footing, that it may be a nursery for future labourers. I have had the pleasure of seeing Mr. Allen and Colonel Williams, and have introduced them to such of my friends as I believe may serve the interest in which they are engaged. By the Divine blessing, I hope that something considerable will be done in England and Scotland.

A few days afterwards, he wrote to the Rev. Mr. McCulloch, Presbyterian minister of Cambuslang:

Mr. Allen, a friend of Governor Belcher, is come over with a commission to negotiate the matter concerning the Presbyterian College in New Jersey. He has brought with him a copy of the letter which Mr. Pemberton sent you some time ago. This letter has been shown to Dr. Doddridge and several of the London ministers, who all approve of the thing, and promise their assistance. Last week, I conversed with Dr. Doddridge concerning it; and the scheme that was then

⁴²Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M.A., Vol. II, page 206.

⁴³Dr. Philip Doddridge, perhaps the most distinguished non-conformist minister of his age, of Northampton, England.

judged most practicable was this—"That Mr. Pemberton's letter should be printed, and that a recommendation of the affair, subscribed by Dr. Doddridge and others, should be annexed; and, further, that a subscription and collections should be set on foot in England, and that afterwards Mr. Allen should go to Scotland." I think it is an affair that requires despatch. Governor Belcher is old, but a most hearty man for promoting God's glory, and the good of mankind. He looks upon the College as his own daughter, and will do all he can to endow her with proper privileges. The present president, Mr. Burr, and most of the trustees, I am well acquainted with. They are friends to vital piety; and, I trust, this work of the Lord will prosper in their hands. The spreading of the gospel in Maryland and Virginia in a great measure depends on it.⁴⁴

At Christmas, 1753, Whitefield's old friend, the Rev. Gilbert Tennent, and the great Virginia preacher, the Rev. Samual Davies, came to England as a second deputation, to solicit subscriptions for the College of New Jersey. Whitefield wrote a recommendatory letter to the Marquis of Lothian; and, through him, introduced the strangers to the Presbyterians of Scotland. As a result, contributions were obtained which "amply enabled the trustees to erect a convenient edifice for the accommodation of the students, and to lay a foundation of a fund for the support of necessary instructors."⁴⁵

Whitefield was present for the opening of the fall session of the College of New Jersey in 1754. Its president, the Rev. Aaron Burr, and the trustees requested his presence in order that they might confer the M. A. degree upon him. Whitefield recorded the time and circumstances surrounding the reception of this honor in the following letter to the Countess of Huntingdon:

Elizabeth Town (New Jersey), September 30. I am now at Governor Belcher's, who sends your ladyship the most cordial respects. His outward man decays, but his inward

⁴⁴Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M.A. Vol. II, pages 344, 348-349

⁴⁵Hodge, Charles, The Constitutional History of The Presbyterian Church in The United States of America, Vol. II, page 243.

man seems to be renewed day by day. I think he ripens for heaven apace. Last week was the New Jersey commencement, at which the president and trustees were pleased to present me with the degree of A. M. The synod succeeded. Such a number of simple-hearted, united ministers, I never saw before. I preached to them several times, and the great Master of assemblies was in the midst of us. Tomorrow, I shall set out, with the worthy president, for New England; and expect to return back to the Orphan House through Virginia. This will be about a two thousand mile circuit.⁴⁶

Whitefield was in England in 1755, and having received the M. A. degree from the College of New Jersey the year before, he devised a plan to bring honor to that institution and its president, the Rev. Aaron Burr. He had formed a high opinion of Mr. Burr, and wished to see the doctor of divinity degree conferred upon him by an English or Scottish university. The Marquis of Lothian had become a generous benefactor to the College of New Jersey, and through him, Whitefield hoped to obtain the coveted distinction from the University of Edinburgh. In a letter to the Marquis, he spoke of the college as "the purest seminary" he had known, and added, "If the degree of doctor of divinity could be procured for Mr. Burr, the present president, it would make an addition to its honours." The Marquis replied, "The University of Edinburgh desires me to obtain some account of Mr. Burr's literature, and performances. This I hope you will send; and a diploma will be immediately transmitted."

Whitefield's response was as follows:

Mr. Burr was educated at Yale College, in Connecticut, New England; and, for his pregnant abilities and well-approved piety, was unanimously chosen to succeed the Rev. Mr. Dickinson, in the care of New Jersey College. It would have delighted your lordship to have seen how gloriously he filled the chair last year, at the New Jersey commencement. His latin oration was beautifully elegant, and was delivered with unaffected, yet striking energy and pathos. As a preacher, disputant, and head of a college, he shines in

⁴⁶ Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M. A.,
Vol. III, pages 103-104.

North America; and the present prosperity of New Jersey College is greatly owing to his learning, piety, and conduct. The students revere and love him. Your lordship might have testimonials enough from good Governor Belcher, Mr. Jonathan Edwards, cum multis aliis. I believe they would all concur in saying that, of his age, now upwards of forty, there is not a more accomplished deserving president in the world. As for anything of his in print, that can be referred to, I can say nothing, except a little pamphlet lately published, in which he has animated the people against the common enemy, and discovered a close attachment to the interest of our rightful sovereign, King George. This piece of Mr. Burr's I have in London, and hope it is in Scotland. I wish the diploma may be transmitted against the next commencement. It will endear your lordship more and more to the good people of America.⁴⁷

On December 9, 1756, Whitefield wrote to Mr. Burr explaining that all was in readiness for the degree to be conferred, except that proper testimonials had not been received from America. Mr. Burr died in September of the following year, never having received the distinction which Whitefield sought for him.⁴⁸

Dartmouth College

The Rev. Eleazer Wheelock, an eloquent and successful New England minister, established the Charity School for Indians at Lebanon, Connecticut, in 1754. This school later developed into what is now Dartmouth College at Hanover, New Hampshire.

Financial support for the Indian school was first provided by private gifts, but by 1760, necessary funds were supplied partly by the Legislature of Connecticut and Massachusetts, partly by the Commissioners in Boston of the Scotch Society for Propagating Christian knowledge, and partly by private subscription.

⁴⁷Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. II, page 342

⁴⁸Ibid., Vol. II, page 385

As early as 1760, Whitefield became one of the School's most zealous supporters, and it was he who brought the institution to the attention of the Earl of Dartmouth who became intensely interested in the work there and began contributing liberally to its support. The Earl of Dartmouth's zeal for Wheelock's endeavor and his generous contributions later received grateful acknowledgment in naming the institution "Dartmouth College."⁴⁹

Lord Dartmouth succeeded to the earldom in 1750, being then about twenty-five years of age. In 1755, he married the only daughter and heiress of Sir Charles Gunter Nichell. Shortly after his marriage he became the intimate friend of Lady Huntingdon, to whom he was introduced by the Countess of Guilford. It was in Lady Huntingdon's home that he first became acquainted with Whitefield, the Wesleys, Romaine, etc. George the Third appointed him principal Secretary of State for the American department, which office his lordship afterwards exchanged for that of Lord Keeper of the Privy Seal. Some years later, he was made Lord Steward of His Majesty's Household. He contributed largely towards Whitefield's Orphan House as well as to the Charity School for Indians.⁵⁰

In 1760, Whitefield wrote Wheelock the following regarding funds solicited from the Marquis of Lothian:

Upon mentioning and a little enforcing your Indian affair, the Lord put it into the heart of the Marquis of Lothian to hand me £ 50. You will not fail to send his Lordship a letter of thanks and some account of the school. Now the great God has given us Canada, what will become of us, if we do not improve it to His glory and the conversion of the poor heathen?⁵¹

⁴⁹Thompson, W. J., Op. Cit., page 354.

⁵⁰Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., page 399.

⁵¹Ibid., Vol. II, page 473.

Whitefield wrote a letter to a friend in London on March 10, 1764, from Concord, twenty miles from Boston; among other matters, he mentioned Wheelock's school as follows:

How would you have been delighted to have seen Mr. Wheelock's Indians! Such a promising nursery of future missionaries, I believe was never seen in New England before. Pray encourage it with all your might.⁵²

Samson Occum, an Indian preacher, visited England during 1766 in the interest of Wheelock's school. Occum was a descendant of Uncas, the celebrated chief of the Mohegans, and was born at Mohegan, about the year 1723. His parents led a wandering life, dwelt in wigwams, and depended chiefly upon hunting and fishing for subsistence. During the religious excitement at the time of Whitefield's early visits to America, Occum was converted, chiefly by the preaching of Whitefield and Gilbert Tennent, and felt called to the Christian ministry in the service of his tribe. In a year or two, he learned to read the Bible, and then went to Wheelock's school where he remained for four years. During the next ten or eleven years, he taught and preached among his people.

During his sixth visit to America, Whitefield met Occum and the two men traveled extensively together.

In 1766, accompanied by the Rev. Mr. Whitaker, Occum was sent to England to obtain subscriptions towards the support of Wheelock's school. He was the first Indian preacher to visit Great Britain, and the chapels in which he preached were thronged. Between February 16, 1766, and July 22, 1767, he delivered, in various parts of the kingdom, more than three hundred sermons. He and Mr. Whitaker met with the most liberal patronage from Christians of all

⁵²Ibid., Vol. II, page 474.

denominations, and of all ranks of society. His majesty, King George III, gave a subscription of £ 200, and the total contributions received in England and Scotland amounted to £ 12,500.

On April 25, 1766, Whitefield wrote to Mr. Gillies of Glasgow and reported on Occum's success in London:

The prospect of a large and effectual door opening among the heathen is very promising. Mr. Occum, the Indian preacher, is a settled humble Christian. The good and great, with a multitude of lower degree, heard him preach last week at Tottenham Court Chapel, and felt much of the power and presence of our common Lord. Mr. Romaine has preached, and collected £ 100; and, I believe, seven or eight hundred pounds more are subscribed. Lord Dartmouth espouses the cause most heartily, and His majesty has become a contributor. The King of kings, and Lord of lords, will bless them for it.⁵³

Wheelock was grateful for Whitefield's strong assistance, and expressed his gratitude in these words:

I am sensible, my dear sir, of my obligations to you, and have been solicitous what return of gratitude to make thereto, and can find none; but this is enough that your work and reward too, is with the Lord, "who is not unrighteous to forget your works and labor of love."⁵⁴

The Charity School for Indians received its present name, "Dartmouth College," and its official charter in 1769. Wheelock remained in charge until his death in 1779, and in his will appointed his son, John Wheelock, to succeed him as president.

Whitefield was undoubtedly the best friend and supporter that the institution had in its early years. While in America, he took a personal interest in its welfare; and, when abroad, he publicized its work and encouraged Christian people to give towards its maintenance.

⁵³Gillies, J., Op. Cit., Chapter XIX

⁵⁴Thompson, W.J., Op. Cit., page 354

Harvard University

In 1636 the legislature of Massachusetts made a liberal appropriation for establishment of a college at Newtown. The name "Cambridge College," was chosen in honor of the University of Cambridge in England. Two years later (1638), John Harvard, a young Charlestown minister, died and left half his property and all his library to the infant institution.

In honor of its benefactor, the college henceforth was called "Harvard College." In a sense the beginning of the college dates from the Harvard legacy, as the appropriation made by the General Court had not as yet been received and it is very doubtful that it was ever paid. Later appropriations, however, were paid and the support of the Massachusetts government was generous, considering the financial condition of the colony. John Harvard's example was quickly followed by others, and soon the college was the recipient of a number of private benefactions. These included large donations by the wealthy, as well as small gifts by the poor. It is reported that at one time every New England family contributed at least a peck of corn or its equivalent in value.⁵⁵

Whitefield's contact with this, the first institution of higher learning in colonial America, was slight but helpful.

He preached there on September 24, 1740, and delivered his sermon under an elm on the college grounds. (It was under this same tree in 1776 that George Washington drew his sword in the cause of the Revolution and took command of the American army.) At least one student was converted by Whitefield's sermon on this occasion. He was Daniel Emerson, who was ordained in 1743, and

⁵⁵Chitwood, O. P., A History of Colonial America, page 564.

became the first minister of Hollis, New Hampshire, where he remained as pastor until his death in 1801.

In 1764, the library of Harvard College burned. Whitefield heard of this, and wished to render some assistance. In writing to a friend in London on March 10, 1764, from Concord, he solicited books for the College:

I also wish you could give some useful Puritanical books to Harvard College Library, lately burnt. Few, perhaps, will give such; and yet a collection of that kind is absolutely necessary for future students, and to poor neighbouring ministers, to whom, I find, the books belonging to the library are freely lent from time to time.

Whitefield's endeavors for the college met with success in several instances; thus this formal expression of appreciation from the Harvard faculty:

At a meeting of the president and fellows of Harvard College, August 22, 1768, the Rev. G. Whitefield, having, in addition to his former kindness to Harvard College, lately presented to the library a new edition of his journals, and having procured large benefactions from several benevolent and respectable gentlemen, voted, that the thanks of the corporation be given to the Rev. Mr. Whitefield, for these instances of candor and generosity.

PRESIDENT

The President,
Mr. Appleton,
Mr. Professor Winthrop,
(A true copy)

Dr. Elliot,
Dr. Cooper,
Treasurer Hubbard.
Per E. Holyoke, President.⁵⁶

⁵⁶ Gillies, J., Memoirs of The Life of the Reverend George Whitefield, M.A.
Chapter XVIII

CHAPTER V

HIS EVANGELISTIC EFFORTS AND SUCCESSES

Whitefield's chief claim to fame is as a Christian evangelist. In this capacity he roamed colonial America from north to south many times over, traveling by land and sea. His efforts were earnest and tireless, and in his total American ministry of nine years, he commanded and maintained one of the largest followings of any evangelist ever to appear on this continent. His efforts and successes can best be understood and appreciated by examining chronologically each of his seven visits to America.

First Visit--Exploring In Georgia

Whitefield's first visit to America was of short duration and was confined almost entirely to Georgia. He arrived at Savannah on May 7, 1738, and embarked the following September 6 in a ship from Charleston to London, thus his visit lasted only four months and extended through the hot summer season.

Although John and Charles Wesley had been unable to live in harmony with the people of Savannah and Frederica, Whitefield found magistrates, officers, and citizenry respectful and cooperative. He visited in Savannah from house to house and expressed a kindly interest in the affairs of the colony. As opportunity offered, he also visited Frederica and the neighboring villages.

His ministry in Savannah included the reading of prayers and expounding of the Scriptures twice each week day. On Sundays, he expounded at five in the morning, read prayers and preached at ten, read prayers and preached again at

three in the afternoon, and expounded the church catechism at seven in the evening. There is no indication of the number of people who attended these services, but certainly it is clear that the populace of Savannah did not lack opportunity to worship as long as Whitefield remained among them!

The longer he was in Georgia the more convinced he became that certain provisions in the colony's charter needed to be changed. He thought it unfair that of the thirteen colonies, Georgia was the only one where slavery and intoxicants were prohibited. He further objected to that provision in the charter which disqualified women from inheriting land. Finally, he thought it improper to arbitrarily grant land to new colonists; he maintained that only good, tillable land should be assigned, and therefore that all land should be carefully examined before being allotted.¹

During Charles Wesley's stay in Georgia, he and General Oglethorpe had seriously considered the establishment of an orphanage in or near Savannah, but the plan had never materialized. The idea, however, was transmitted to Whitefield who, having witnessed the need for such an institution, decided to promote it to the best of his ability. To insure the success of this benevolent undertaking he needed the cooperation of the Trustees of the colony as well as funds from the people of England. He quickly made plans therefore to return to England in order to promote the orphanage scheme.²

Before departing for England, he went to Charleston and paid a visit to Alexander Garden, Episcopal Commissary, who held jurisdiction over the Savannah parish. The Commissary received Whitefield cordially, had him preach morning

¹Whitefield used his influence through the years in getting these discriminatory provisions deleted from the Georgia charter; this was finally done in 1749.

²Gillies, John, Memoirs of Rev. George Whitefield, Chapter III.

and evening on Sunday in the Charleston church, and promised his loyal support to Whitefield's ministry at Savannah.

As noted above, Whitefield sailed from Charleston to England on September 6, 1738, and thus his first sojourn in America came to a close. From the point of view of evangelistic accomplishments, it had not been an outstanding visit. His ministry in Savannah and Frederica had been earnest and full, but not unusual. The chief benefit of his stay in the infant colony was to acquaint himself with the state of religion there and the existing economic and political conditions, as well as the need for an orphan house.

Second Visit--The Great Awakening Revived And Expanded

Of Whitefield's seven visits to America, his second is the most significant, for it was on this visit that he rose to the height of his popularity in America and that he revived and expanded the Great Awakening.

Whitefield's Theology And Plans For Service In America

Whitefield's transatlantic crossing in 1739 for his second visit to America required eleven weeks. A large portion of this time was spent in writing letters, so that, when he landed, he had more than sixty ready for the post. Some of these are particularly valuable in revealing his altered theological attitudes and future plans for service in America.

Extracts from two of these letters make it clear that Whitefield while in England between his first and second visit to America had become a Calvinist. The first extract is from a letter addressed to Howell Harris, the Welch itinerant. In it Whitefield says:

Since I saw you, God has been pleased to enlighten me more in that comfortable doctrine of election, etc. At

my return, I hope to be more explicit than I have been.
 God forbid, my dear brother, that we should shun to declare
 the whole counsel of God!

The second extract is from a letter to the Rev. James Hervey, author of the well known "Meditations and Contemplations":

O the excellency of the doctrine of election, and of the saints' final perseverance, to those who are sealed by the Spirit of promise! I am persuaded, till a man comes to believe and feel these important truths, he cannot come out of himself; but, when convinced of these, and assured of the application of them to his own heart, he then walks by faith indeed, not in himself, but in the Son of God, who died and gave Himself for him.³

Whitefield's devotion to Calvinistic theology continued all his life, and served as an aid to his American ministry where the evangelists of the Great Awakening including Frelinghuysen, the Tennents, and Jonathan Edwards had been preaching a personalized Calvinism. Henceforth, however, the question of theology put a serious strain on the friendship between Whitefield and the Wesleys, for John and Charles had adopted Arminian theology and preached the doctrine of free grace.

Portions of two other letters written during the voyage to America in 1739 reveal the important fact that Whitefield was entertaining the idea of resigning his Savannah parish in order that he might be free to tour the colonies as an itinerant preacher. He had stirred England in a phenomenal way as he had gone preaching from place to place; everywhere he had traveled unprecedented crowds had flocked to hear him. It is not surprising then that he entertained the hope of rendering a similar ministry in America. In a letter to Charles Wesley, he wrote:

If Mr. Hutchins would come to supply my place, I would keep the parsonage of Savannah. Otherwise, I shall resign all but the Orphan House.

³Tyerman, L., The Life of The Rev. George Whitefield, Vol. 1, page 315.

The same intention is again expressed in another letter:

I intend resigning the parsonage of Savannah. The Orphan House I can take care of, supposing I should be kept at a distance. Besides, when I have resigned the parish, I shall be more at liberty to make a tour round America, if God should ever call me to such a work. However, I determine nothing; I wait on the Lord. I am persuaded He will shew me what is His will.⁴

Whitefield's uncertainty as to the nature of his work in America was soon resolved, for after arriving in the middle colonies the young preacher, then only twenty-four years of age, was immediately thrust into a ministry as extensive as colonial America itself. His path of duty as an itinerant became unmistakably clear and was faithfully followed during each subsequent visit to America.

In The Middle Colonies

Whitefield's second visit in America began when he disembarked from the "Elizabeth" at Lewis Town on October 30, 1739.

He proceeded to Philadelphia and found an enthusiastic welcome awaiting him there. Knowing of his popularity in England, the people of Philadelphia were eager to hear the young preacher proclaim the Word of God. The Quakers, the ministers and churchmen of the Church of England, of the Presbyterian Church, and of the Baptist Church--all warmly welcomed Whitefield and solicited him to preach among them.

By November 5 he had accepted their invitations and began preaching each day to crowded congregations composed both of churched and unchurched people. On at least three occasions he preached from the court house balcony in the evenings to congregations which grew from six to eight thousand.

⁴Ibid., Vol. I, page 316.

On November 10, it was Whitefield's privilege to meet elder William Tennent whom he described as the "old grey-headed disciple and soldier of Jesus Christ."⁵

One evening, after he had preached from the court house balcony, the house where Whitefield was residing was filled with people who came to join in psalms and family prayers. "Many," he wrote, "wept most bitterly whilst I was praying. Their hearts seemed to be loaded with a sense of sin, the only preparative for the visitation of Jesus Christ. Blessed be the Lord for sending me hither! Lord, give me humility, and make me truly thankful!"⁶

On Monday, November 12, Whitefield left Philadelphia for the purpose of visiting New York. En route, he preached in Burlington, twenty miles from Philadelphia, and met Gilbert Tennent at New Brunswick, preached in his meeting-house, and in his company proceeded to New York.

Gilbert Tennent had been the chief figure in the middle colony awakening and was soon to become Whitefield's strongest co-worker in America. Whitefield, at the time, described him simply as "an eminent Dissenting minister, about forty years of age."

Whitefield and Tennent arrived in New York during the afternoon of November 14 for a five day visit. Tennent preached that evening in the Rev. Ebenezer Pemberton's Presbyterian meeting-house. Whitefield in his journal entry on this date states that he never before heard such a searching sermon, and further remarked:

He convinced me more and more that we can preach the gospel of Christ no further than we have experienced the power of it

⁵For biographical sketch see page 98. Among those ministers trained by William Tennent were: his four sons, Gilbert, William Jr., John, and Charles; the two Blair brothers, Samuel and John; Samuel Finley; William Robinson; John Rowland; and Samuel Davies.

⁶Whitefield, G., Journals, edited by W. Wale, page 341

in our own hearts. He is a son of thunder and does not fear the faces of men. After sermon, we spent the evening together at Mr. Noble's house. My soul was humbled and melted down with a sense of God's mercies, and I found more and more what a babe and novice I was in the things of God.⁷

On November 16, Whitefield was denied the use of the Anglican Church, but this did not greatly disturb him for he preached twice that same day, once during the afternoon in the open to about two thousand people, and again that night in the Presbyterian meeting-house. During the remaining days in New York, he preached at least once a day and sometimes twice a day to crowded congregations. On Sunday evening, November 18, he left by boat for Elizabeth Town.

Such was the commencement of Whitefield's ministry in Philadelphia and New York. The people in both cities received the gospel gladly, but a little opposition was shown in New York when Whitefield was denied the use of the Anglican Church. Just as he had been forced to do in England, so in America and first in New York he assembled his hearers in the open air.

At the very beginning of Whitefield's American ministry one thing was clear: he had an astonishing power to attract and hold audiences. For an eyewitness account of Whitefield's first New York preaching the following is quoted from Prince's Christian History:

I never saw, in my life, such attentive audiences as Mr. Whitefield's in New York. All he said was demonstration, life, and power. The people's eyes and ears hung upon his lips. They greedily devoured every word. He preached, during four days, twice every day. He is a man of middle stature, of a slender body, of a fair complexion, and of a comely appearance. He is of a sprightly, cheerful temper, and acts and moves with great agility and life. The endowments of his mind are uncommon; his wit is quick and piercing; his imagination lively and florid; and, as far as I can discern, both are under the direction of a solid judgment. He has a most ready memory, and, I

⁷ Ibid., page 344.

think, speaks entirely without notes. He has a clear and musical voice, and a wonderful command of it. He uses much gesture, but with great propriety. Every accent of his voice, every motion of his body speaks; and both are natural and unaffected. If his delivery be the product of art, it is certainly the perfection of it, for it is entirely concealed. He has a great mastery of words, but studies much plainness of speech. He spends not his zeal in trifles. He breathes a most catholic spirit; and professes that his whole design is to bring men to Christ; and that, if he can obtain this end, his converts may go to what church, and worship God in what form, they like best.

Reference is made in the closing lines of the above quotation to Whitefield's catholic spirit. It is interesting to note that at the very commencement of his American career, he evidenced a spirit of cooperation with all religious groups. This spirit became one of the outstanding characteristics of his entire life. In the colonies he identified himself with no single denominational body, but served them all without favoritism; he was happy among Congregationalists, Presbyterians, Baptists, Dutch Reformed, Quakers, and any others with whom he could co-operate in the work of saving souls. He was most closely associated with the revivalistic branch of the Presbyterian denomination, but this relationship never caused him to discriminate against religious groups. In a letter to Rev. Ralph Erskine of Scotland, Whitefield states his position in this way:

For my own part, though I profess myself a minister of the Church of England, I am of a catholic spirit; and, if I see any man who loves the Lord Jesus in sincerity, I am⁸ not very solicitous to what outward communion he belongs.

While in New York, Whitefield had received an invitation from Jonathan Dickinson, a dissenting minister, to preach in Elizabeth Town. Whitefield accepted the invitation and fulfilled his engagement on November 19 while returning to Philadelphia. Dickinson was a graduate of Yale College and was

⁸Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M.A., Vol. I page 140.

revivalistically inclined but had been hesitant to join the evangelistic movement led by the Log College graduates. The invitation to Whitefield to preach in his pulpit thoroughly committed Dickinson to the revival.

On November 20, Whitefield visited Gilbert Tennent in New Brunswick and preached there three times that day: at noon, in the afternoon and again at night. The next day he preached at Maidenhead and traveled on to Trent Town where he preached during the evening in the court house.

November 22 was a memorable date, for it was then that Whitefield first visited Neshaminy, Pennsylvania, where William Tennent's Log College was located. A portion of Whitefield's journal entry for that day tells the story of his visit and his pleasure in the company of the elder William Tennent and his wife:

Set out for Neshaminy (twenty miles from Trent Town), where old Mr. Tennent lives, and keeps an academy, and where I was to preach today, according to appointment. We came thither about twelve, and found about three thousand people gathered together in the meeting-house yard, and Mr. William Tennent preaching to them, because we were beyond the appointed time. When I came up, he stopped, and sung a psalm, and then I began to speak. At first, the people seemed unaffected, but, in the midst of my discourse, the hearers began to be melted down and cried much. After I had finished, Mr. Gilbert Tennent gave a word of exhortation. At the end of his discourse, we sung a psalm, and then dismissed the people with a blessing. After our exercises were over, we went to old Mr. Tennent, who entertained us like one of the ancient patriarchs. His wife seemed to me like Elizabeth, and he like Zacharias; both, as far as I can find, walk in all the ordinances and commandments of the Lord blameless. We had sweet communion with each other, and spent the evening in concerting measures for promoting our Lord's kingdom. It happens very providentially that Mr. Tennent and his brethren are appointed to be a presbytery by the synod, so that they intend breeding up gracious youths, and sending them out into our Lord's vineyard.¹⁰

Before leaving Neshaminy, Whitefield and William Tennent as well as a group of Log College ministers agreed to pray for each other publically.

⁹Whitefield, G., Journals, edited by W. Wale, pages 347-348

¹⁰Ibid., pages 350-351

Whitefield, whether he realized it or not, had found his closest friends and most loyal supporters in America; they were not among his fellow Anglicans but among the Presbyterians. There was a two-fold tie that bound this group to Whitefield and him to them, namely, their adherence to Calvinistic theology and their consistent practice of revivalistic methods.¹¹

In the concluding sentence of Whitefield's journal entry quoted above, the statement is made that "Mr. Tennent and his brethren" had been constituted a presbytery by the synod. This action was taken by the Synod of Philadelphia in 1738 when New Brunswick Presbytery was organized. It consisted of five evangelical ministers, three of whom were Log College men. This development proved advantageous to the revivalists who, being in a separate presbytery, could license and ordain men of their own kind. Increasing opposition, however, began to manifest itself among the antirevivalists; and, as a consequence, they sought to control the situation by the enactment of laws in the Synod requiring all candidates for ordination to present diplomas from either New England or European colleges. This enactment was of course aimed at the graduates of the Log College and divided the Synod of Philadelphia into two factions: those who favored the revival and those who opposed it. This division ultimately led in 1741 to a split in colonial Presbyterianism into New Side and Old Side.¹²

Whitefield left Neshaminy on November 23 and after preaching at Abingdon to more than two thousand people arrived that night in Philadelphia. The following day he preached morning and afternoon to "a vast concourse of all denominations."

In Philadelphia on Sunday, November 25, Whitefield was publically accused by an unidentified person of preaching false doctrine. Whitefield's record of

¹¹Sweet, William Warren, Religion In Colonial America, page 277

¹²Ibid., page 276, also Bacon, L.W., A History Of American Christianity, page 166

the incident is as follows:

Was somewhat alarmed this morning by one, who, after my sermon, told the congregation in the church, with a loud voice, 'That there was no such term as imputed righteousness in Holy Scripture; that such a doctrine put a stop to all goodness; and that we were to be judged for our good works and obedience, and were commanded to do and live.' When he had ended, I denied his first proposition, and brought a text to prove that 'imputed righteousness' was a scriptural expression; but, thinking the church an improper place for disputation, I said no more at that time. In the afternoon, however, I discoursed upon the words, 'The Lord our righteousness,' and shewd how the Lord Jesus was to be our whole righteousness. I proved how the contrary doctrine overthrew all divine revelation, and endeavoured to answer objections. I produced the Articles of our Church, and concluded with an exhortation to lay aside reasoning infidelity, and to submit to Jesus Christ, who is the end of the law for righteousness, to every one that believeth. The church was thronged within and without; all were wonderfully attentive; and many, as I was informed, were convinced that the Lord Christ was our righteousness.¹³

The disputation referred to above was an attack against one of Whitefield's favorite preaching themes, the righteousness of Christ imputed to the penitent sinner, but more serious still it inferred that he taught antinomianism. Whitefield's defense was in the form of a sermon entitled, "The Lord Our Righteousness," based on the text Jeremiah 23:6. He preached the sermon repeatedly not simply to defend himself against false accusation but to set forth the truth that he felt indispensable to the Christian life. His early biographer, Dr. John Gillies, selected this to be the first in a group of twenty-five of Whitefield's sermons published in the volume, Memoirs of The Life of the Reverend George Whitefield. The following paragraphs are quoted from the sermon and illustrate Whitefield's faith in the matter:

Many are the objections which the proud hearts of fallen men are continually urging against this whole-

¹³Whitefield, G., Journals, edited by W. Wale, pages 352-353

some, this divine, this soul-saving doctrine. I come now, in the third place, to answer some of those which I think the most considerable.

And first, they say, because they would appear friends to morality, 'That the doctrine of an imputed righteousness is destructive of good works, and leads to licentiousness.'

And who, pray, are the persons that generally urge this objection? Are they men full of faith, and men really concerned for good works? No, whatever few exceptions there may be, if there be any at all, it is notorious, they are generally men of corrupt minds, reprobate concerning the faith. The best title I can give them is, that of profane moralists, or moralists falsely so called. For I appeal to the experience of the present, as well as past ages, if iniquity did and does not most abound where the doctrine of Christ's whole personal righteousness is most cried down, and most seldom mentioned,--Arminian being antichristian principles, always did and always will lead to antichristian practises. And never was there a reformation brought about in the church, but by the preaching the doctrine of Christ's imputed righteousness. This, as that man of God, Luther, calls it, is *Articulus stantis aut cadentis Ecclesiae*, the article upon which the church stands or falls. And though the preachers of this doctrine are generally branded by those on the other side with the opprobrious names of antinomians, deceivers, and what not; yet, I believe if the truth of the doctrine on both sides was to be judged of by the lives of the preachers and professors of it, those on our side the question would have the advantage every way.

It is true, this, as well as every other doctrine of grace, may be abused. And perhaps the unchristian walk of some, who have talked of Christ's imputed righteousness, justification by faith, and the like, and yet never felt it imputed to their own souls, has given the enemies of the Lord this cause to blaspheme. But this is a very unsafe, as well as very unfair way of arguing. The only question should be, whether or not this doctrine of an imputed righteousness does, in itself, cut off the occasion of good works, or lead to licentiousness? No, in no wise. It excludes works indeed from being any cause of our justification in the sight of God. But it requires good works as a proof of our having this righteousness imputed to us, and as a declarative evidence of our justification in the sight of men. And then how can the doctrine of an imputed righteousness be a doctrine leading to licentiousness?¹⁴

The remaining few days of Whitefield's second visit to Philadelphia were exciting and busy ones; in addition to preaching, he held numerous conferences

¹⁴Also found in Whitefield's Works, Vol. V, pages 216-234.

with many men and women who came to him with spiritual problems. On November 26, he preached twice to large congregations in Philadelphia, and the next day traveled seven miles to German Town where he preached to six thousand people, representing more than fifteen denominations. Then on November 28, it was announced that Whitefield would preach his farewell sermon in Philadelphia that afternoon. The crowd which assembled was so great, estimated at ten thousand, that it was adjourned to the fields. Whitefield left Philadelphia on November 29 and rode to Chester where he preached to five thousand people; a thousand, it was said, had come from Philadelphia to hear the young preacher once more.¹⁵

Benjamin Franklin, a man of conservative views and never given to exaggeration, gave testimony to Whitefield's outstanding efforts and successes during these early visits to Philadelphia. He wrote:

In 1739, the Rev. Whitefield arrived among us. He was, at first, permitted to preach in some of our churches; but the clergy, taking a dislike to him, soon refused him their pulpits, and he was obliged to preach in the fields. The multitudes, of all sects and denominations, that attended his sermons, were enormous, and it was a matter of speculation to me (who was one of the number) to observe the extraordinary influence of his oratory on his hearers, and how much they admired and respected him, notwithstanding his common abuse of them, by assuring them they were naturally half beasts and half devils. It was wonderful to see the change soon made in the manners of our inhabitants. From being thoughtless and indifferent about religion, it seemed as if the world were growing religious, so that one could not walk through Philadelphia in the evening without hearing psalms sung in different families of every street. Mr. Whitefield, on leaving us, went preaching all the way through the colonies to Georgia.¹⁶

On November 30, Whitefield preached twice at Wilmington; while there he met William Tennent, Jr. Together they journeyed the next day to Newcastle

¹⁵Whitefield, G., Journals, edited by W. Wale, page 358

¹⁶Franklin, B., The Autobiography of Benjamin Franklin, page 118

where Whitefield preached; then they rode to Christian Bridge where Whitefield preached again. The next day, December 2, they came to Whiteclay Creek, near William Tennent's meeting house; the weather was rainy, but they found a vast gathering assembled to hear Whitefield preach. A Philadelphia correspondent sent the following note which appeared in the Boston News Letter for December 6, 1739: "On Sunday at Whiteclay Creek he preach'd twice, resting about half an hour between the sermons, to about eight thousand people: of whom three thousand 'tis computed came on horseback. It rain'd most of the time, and yet he stood in the open air."¹⁷

With the preaching at Whiteclay Creek, Whitefield completed his first preaching tour of the middle colonies; he then made his way through Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas, to Georgia. His initial success in the middle colonies had been startling; no preacher before him had even approached such wide popularity in this or any other section of colonial America. His success, however, was yet in its infancy.

In The Southern Colonies

Whitefield's introduction to the southern colonies of Maryland, Virginia, North and South Carolina came in the period of December, 1739--January, 1740, while on his way from Pennsylvania to Georgia. He came into Maryland at North East on December 3, crossed the Potomac River into Virginia on December 11, entered North Carolina on December 19, and South Carolina on January 1, 1740. He traveled entirely by horseback and stopped frequently to preach in Maryland and Virginia, and occasionally in North and South Carolina.

He visited Williamsburg, Virginia, briefly, and rejoiced in the college

¹⁷Fay, Bernard, Franklin, The Apostle of Modern Times, page 191.

there which at the time had eight scholars, a president, two masters, and professors in several sciences. Whitefield was especially interested in learning that the masters of the college were his contemporaries at Oxford.

An extended journey such as Whitefield made through this part of colonial America was at the time not only inconvenient but dangerous. He often traversed primeval forests, uncultivated plains, and tractless swamps. On December 31, just before leaving North Carolina and entering South Carolina, he encountered a flooded area, passed through it safely, and described this hazardous experience as follows:

Set out early, and met with more perils by land than we have been exposed to yet. The swamps and creeks which lay in the way were filled with water; and the bridges, being out of repair, rendered travelling very dangerous. In one place, we were obliged to swim our horses; in many, the waters were very high, and were not to be passed without much difficulty. But we met with two good guides, by whose assistance we were brought, at night, to a little house, where with pleasure we reflected on the dangers and deliverances of the day.¹⁸

The response to Whitefield's evangelistic efforts in the southern colonies was a shocking contrast to what it had recently been in Philadelphia and New York. In the North he had been in the midst of a great revival, but in the southern colonies he found almost no religious fervor, and felt that he had come into a moral and religious desert. Writing to a friend in New York on December 8, 1739, from Upper Marlborough, Virginia, Whitefield reported that as far as spiritual matters were concerned the section was in a deep sleep. He mentioned having preached twice at Annapolis in Maryland and indicated that the results were slight.

Whitefield arrived in Savannah on January 10, 1740, and soon thereafter took up regular pastoral duties in his church. He was faithful to administer

¹⁸ Whitefield, G., Journals, edited by W. Wale, pages 378-379

the Sacrament and preached on such favorite subjects as justification and the new birth. Being thus engaged, he remained in Savannah for two months and during this time personally supervised the establishment of Bethesda Orphan House.

He visited Charleston March 14 for six days; the primary purpose of his visit was to see his brother who had come from England. While in Charleston, however, Whitefield called on Commissary Alexander Garden who received him in a cool, unenthusiastic manner. It is not surprising that the commissary was not cordial when it is recalled that Whitefield on returning to America, instead of hastening to his own parish church at Savannah, had spent more than two months preaching as an itinerant, principally in dissenting meeting-houses of the middle colonies. On Sunday, March 16, Whitefield attended services in the Anglican Church and heard Garden represent him as the Pharisee who came to the temple, saying, "God, I thank Thee that I am not as other men are." After this public attack by the commissary, Whitefield made bad matters worse by preaching in the Independent, Baptist, and Presbyterian meeting-houses.¹⁹ Thus we have the commencement of a violent dispute between Garden and Whitefield which soon found its way into the courts and press. This whole affair was unfortunate as it served no constructive ends but rather detracted from the influence and memory of both men.

Whitefield returned to Savannah around March 20, laid the first brick in the Orphan House, and embarked on April 2 on board the "Savannah" for Newcastle, Pennsylvania.

¹⁹Ibid., page 399

In The Middle Colonies

Whitefield in the company of William Seward landed at Newcastle, Pennsylvania, on Sunday, April 13, 1740.²⁰ He spent the next nine days in Philadelphia and its immediate neighborhood.

The young evangelist's soul was stirred when he heard reports of the effects of his last visit to Philadelphia. In a letter, written on the day he arrived there, he stated:

People are much alarmed already. I find God has been pleased to do great things, by what He enabled me to deliver when last here. Two ministers have been convinced of their formal state, notwithstanding they held and preached the doctrines of grace. One plainly told the congregation he had been deceiving himself and them, and could not preach any more, but desired the people to pray with him. The other is now a flame of fire, and has been much owned of God. Very many, I believe, of late have been brought savingly to believe on the Lord Jesus. The work much increases. A primitive spirit revives; and many, I hope, will be brought to live steadfast in the apostle's doctrine, in fellowship, in breaking of bread, and in prayer.²¹

In arranging to preach in Philadelphia, Whitefield applied first of all for the use of the Anglican Church, but this was refused. His friends then erected a stage for him on what was called Society Hill, and around this his immense congregations gathered. It is reported that he preached to audiences numbering not less than five thousand and sometimes as great as fifteen thousand. Scores of people including some Negroes, came to him privately, deeply convinced of sin, and asked his advice and prayers. John Rodgers, then a boy of twelve, attended the Society Hill services, and at one service held a lantern

²⁰ William Seward was a wealthy English gentleman who accompanied Whitefield to America in August, 1739. In England, he had become acquainted with the Methodists and in November, 1739, found peace with God through faith in Christ.

²¹ Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M.A., Vol. I, page 165.

on the stage for Whitefield. This lad later became a Presbyterian minister and was elected first moderator of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church.

During these nine days in Philadelphia, Whitefield did not confine his preaching to the city but extended his ministry into the neighboring settlements. He preached at Abington to three thousand. Accompanied by a cavalcade of about forty persons, he rode to Whitemarsh and to German Town and preached in each place to assembled thousands. He went to Greenwich in the East Jerseys, and to Gloucester, about four miles from Philadelphia; many of the Philadelphians formed a part of his audience.²²

The enthusiasm created by Whitefield's visit was enormous and continued after he had left the city. The Memoirs of Mrs. Hannah Hodge describes the results of his visit in the following paragraph:

The effects produced, in Philadelphia, by the preaching of Mr. Whitefield were astonishing. Numbers of almost all religious denominations and many who had no connection with any denomination, were brought to enquire, with the utmost earnestness, what they should do to be saved. Such was the engagedness of multitudes to listen to spiritual instruction, that there was public worship, regularly, twice a day, for a year; and, on the Lord's-day, it was celebrated generally thrice, and frequently four times. The city contained twenty-six societies for social prayer and religious conference. So great was the enthusiasm to hear Mr. Whitefield preach, that many from Philadelphia followed him on foot to Chester, to Abington, to Neshaminy, and some even to New Brunswick, in New Jersey, the distance of sixty miles.

The Philadelphia visit ended when on April 23 Whitefield and Seward left for New Brunswick. En route Whitefield preached to large audiences in Neshaminy, Shippack, Henry Anti's plantation, and Anwell. He arrived in New Brunswick on April 26 and visited with Gilbert Tennent. On the following day which was

²²Whitefield, G., Journals, edited by W. Wale, pages 404-410

Sunday, he preached in New Brunswick to seven or eight thousand people. Seward took his leave of Whitefield on Monday, April 28, for England to arrange payment for the five thousand acres of land purchased for Whitefield's school for Negroes in Pennsylvania. As has been noted in the preceding chapter this was an ill-fated mission; Seward was murdered in Wales six months after leaving America.

Whitefield then proceeded to New York by way of Woodbridge and Elizabeth Town. He arrived in New York on April 29 and preached on "the common" to five or six thousand. During the night a scaffold was erected from which he preached twice on Wednesday, April 30. He remained in New York May 1, 2, and 3, preaching twice a day to large congregations. He left New York on May 4, and returned to Philadelphia, preaching on his way in Freehold, Allen's Town, and Burlington.

On May 8 Whitefield was again in Philadelphia, this time for a brief four day visit. In these few days he preached seven times to tremendous crowds, and his success was even greater than before. On Sunday, May 11, he preached in the morning to fifteen thousand people and in the afternoon he preached his farewell sermon to nearly twenty thousand hearers. At the day's end, after preaching, praying, and conversing in the midst of unprecedented crowds, Whitefield remarked in his Journal that he never yet saw a more general awakening in any place.²³

He left Philadelphia on May 12, and on May 15 boarded the sloop, the "Savannah", at Newcastle to return to Georgia. On his way to Newcastle, he had preached at Derby, Chester, Wilmington, Whiteclay Creek, Nottingham, and Fagg's Manor to thousands of people.

²³Ibid., pages 417-421.

Unquestionably his evangelistic endeavours in Philadelphia had been marvelous. Moreover, the enthusiasm which he had aroused was not left to die, but remained lively under the preaching of numerous ministers who had closely allied themselves with the revival. The following letter which was written on June 12, one month after Whitefield left Philadelphia, is not only a tribute to Whitefield, but also describes the religious work and activities which were sponsored in Philadelphia during his absence. This letter was published in the New England Journal of June 24, 1740:²⁴

Philadelphia, June, 12, 1740. During the session of the Presbyterian Synod, which began here on the 28th of last month, and continued to the 3rd inst., there were no less than fourteen sermons preached on Society Hill, to large audiences, by the Revs. Messrs. Tennent, Davenport, Rowland, and Blair; besides what were delivered in the Presbyterian and Baptist meetings, and expoundings and exhortations in private houses. The alteration in the face of religion in Philadelphia is surprising. Never did the people shew so great a willingness to attend sermons, nor the preachers greater zeal and diligence in performing the duties of their function. Religion has become the subject of most conversations. No books are in request, but those of piety and devotion. Instead of singing idle songs and ballads, the people are everywhere entertaining themselves with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. All this, under God, is owing to the successful labours of the Rev. Mr. Whitefield.

In Savannah and Charleston

Whitefield returned to his Savannah parish on June 5, 1740, after an absence of nine weeks. His ecclesiastical position in the Anglican Church at this time was difficult to define. He was an ordained clergyman of the Church of England, and Savannah was his parish, yet he was not fulfilling the responsibility with which he was charged. He had been in America seven months and one

²⁴Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. I, page 387.

week of his second visit, and most of this time had been spent preaching in the middle colonies far removed from Savannah. According to Anglican standards, he had practiced ecclesiastical irregularities including preaching and praying extempore, and conducting services without wearing proper vestments. Whitefield realized that such conduct was not in keeping with the established policies of his church, yet he neither asked to be released from his responsibilities nor made any effort to mend his ways. On the contrary, he tenaciously held to his parish and seemed to revel in his irregular practices. His position in these matters cannot be justified, but it should be borne in mind that at this time Whitefield was only twenty-five years of age and had recently been catapulted to dizzy heights of fame. A less famous and more mature person would scarcely have made his mistake. At any rate, Whitefield should not have been surprised in the least when what he calls "persecution" arose at the instigation of Alexander Garden.

After being in Savannah for some twenty-five days, Whitefield journeyed to Charleston, arriving there July 2, and immediately began an intensive preaching schedule. Then on July 7 Garden commenced proceedings against him, and on July 11 Whitefield received the following citation from the commissary:

You are hereby cited to appear at the Church of St. Philip's Charleston, on Tuesday the fifteenth day of this instant July, betwixt the hours of nine and ten in the forenoon, before the Reverend Alexander Garden, Commissary, to answer to such articles as shall there be objected to you.

William Smith, Apparitor.²⁵

On Sunday, July 13, Whitefield preached in Charleston in the morning and again in the evening. He also attended services in St. Philip's Church and

²⁵Ibid., Vol. I, page 397.

found that Garden had chosen him as the principal theme for that day's sermon; Whitefield gives his own account of what took place and his reaction to it:

Had some infernal spirit been sent to draw my picture, I think it scarcely possible that he could have painted me in more horrid colours. I think, if ever, then was the time that all manner of evil was spoken against me falsely for Christ's sake. The commissary seemed to ransack church history for instances of enthusiasm and abused grace. He drew a parallel between me and all the Oliverians, Ranters, Quakers, and French Prophets, till he came down to a family of Dutarts, who lived, not many years ago, in South Carolina, and were guilty of the most notorious incests and murders. To the honour of God's free grace be it spoken, whilst the commissary was representing me thus, I felt the blessed Spirit strengthening and refreshing my soul. God, at the same time, gave me to see what I was by nature, and how I had deserved His eternal wrath; and, therefore, I did not feel the least resentment against the preacher. No; I pitied, I prayed for him; and wished, from my soul, that the Lord would convert him, as He once did the persecutor Saul.²⁶

On Tuesday, July 15, the court, consisting of the commissary, and the Rev. Messrs. Guy, Willichamp, Roe, and Orr, assembled at St. Philip's Church for Whitefield's trial. This was the first trial to be held in an Episcopal Court in the English colonies. Whitefield refused to answer the accusations made against him until he was satisfied concerning the authority of the court to examine him. Garden had been appointed to the position of commissary by the Bishop of London, and there was considerable doubt even among the Trustees of Georgia that the Bishop of London had any jurisdiction in the transatlantic colonies. Commissary Garden's authority, therefore, was skeptically viewed and never fully established.

In addition to raising the question of authority, Whitefield presented an "exception" against Garden acting as his judge as there was reason to believe the commissary was prejudiced against him. Whitefield then registered an appeal to his Majesty in the High Court of Chancery and took an oath before the com-

²⁶ Whitefield, G., Journals, edited by W. Wale, page 442

missary that he would present his reasons for appeal within a year.²⁷

Whitefield, faithful to this promise presented his case in proper form to the Court of Chancery, but a hearing was deferred. Finally, after the expiration of a year and a day from the date of Whitefield's original appeal, he was summoned to appear before Commissary Garden's court for the second time. He neither appeared nor answered the summons, and as a result the following high-sounding but innocuous decree was published:

Therefore we, Alexander Garden, the Judge aforesaid, having first invoked the name of Christ, and setting and having God Himself alone before our eyes, and by and with the advice of the Reverend persons, William Guy, Timothy Millichamp, Stephen Roe, and William Orr, with whom in that part we have advised and maturely deliberated, do pronounce, decree, and declare the aforesaid George Whitefield, clerk, to have been at the times articulated, and now to be a priest of the Church of England, and at the times and days in that part articulated to have officiated as a minister in divers meeting-houses in Charleston, in the province of South Carolina, by praying and preaching to public congregations; and at such times to have omitted to use the Form of Prayer prescribed in the Communion Book, or Book of Common Prayer; or at least according to the laws, canons, and constitutions ecclesiastical in that part made, provided, and promulged, not to have used the same according to the lawful proofs before us in that part judicially had and made. We, therefore, pronounce, decree, and declare that the said George Whitefield, for his excesses and faults, ought, duly and canonically, and according to the exigence of the law in that part of the premises, to be corrected and punished, and also to be suspended from his office; and, accordingly, by these presents, we do suspend him, the said George Whitefield; and, for being so suspended, we also pronounce, decree, and declare him to be denounced, declared, and published openly and publicly in the face of the Church.²⁸

Commissary Garden's proceeding did not seriously interfere with Whitefield's preaching; even during the period of court hearings he managed to preach once and sometimes twice daily. His preaching efforts during this

²⁷Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. I, page 399

²⁸Ibid., Vol. I, page 400

period, extending from July 3 to July 24, seem to have made a wholesome impression upon the Charleston people. Whitefield's account of the changes which were wrought is as follows:

At my first coming, the people of Charleston seemed to be wholly devoted to pleasure. One, well acquainted with their manners and circumstances, told me that they spent more on their polite entertainments than the amount raised by their rates for the poor. But now the jewellers and dancing-masters begin to cry out that their craft is in danger. A vast alteration is discernible in ladies' dresses; and some, while I have been speaking, have been so convinced of the sin of wearing jewels, that, I have seen them, with blushes, put their hands to their ears, and cover them with their fans. The reformation, also, has gone further than externals. Many moral, good sort of men, who before were settled on their lees, have been awakened to seek after Jesus Christ; and many a Lydia's heart has been opened to receive the things that were spoken. Indeed, the word came like a hammer and a fire. Several of the negroes did their work in less time than usual, that they might come to hear me; and many of their owners, who have been awakened, have resolved to teach them Christianity. Had I time and proper schoolmasters, I might immediately erect a negro school in South Carolina, as well as in Pennsylvania. Many would willingly contribute both money and land.²⁹

On July 24, Whitefield sailed from Charleston for a brief stay in Savannah. On August 3, though sick, he preached at the urgent request of several friends who had traveled a considerable distance to hear him. He spent the two following Sundays, August 10 and 17, with his parishioners, but on the night of the 17th boarded a sloop for New England.

In New England

Whitefield landed at Newport in Rhode Island on Sunday, September 14, 1740. He had come to New England at the insistent urging of Dr. Benjamin

²⁹Whitefield, G., Journals, edited by W. Wale, page 444

Colman, pastor of Boston's Brattle Street Church and one of the most distinguished ministers in that section. All New England had been filled with religious excitement by the Edwards' revival, and Whitefield's reception was enthusiastic in the extreme. The fact that Whitefield was in sympathy with the doctrine and usages of the Congregationalists and Presbyterians contributed no little to his popularity in this section where these denominations were predominant.

He remained in Newport a few days preaching in the Anglican Church at ten in the morning and three in the afternoon. The congregations were very large; and, at the conclusion of the afternoon service on the second day, more than a thousand people followed him to his lodging. In response to their pleas, he preached again using as a text for the unscheduled sermon: "Blessed are they that hunger and thirst after righteousness; for they shall be filled."³⁰

On September 19 Whitefield began ten days of evangelistic activity in Boston where he preached to immense congregations. On several occasions the crowds overflowed the largest meeting-houses and were assembled on the Common. On September 22 when he arrived at the meeting-house where he was to preach, he found that it had been choked with people; panic had seized the crowd, and in the press and confusion five people were killed and several seriously injured.³¹ On September 24 he preached twice before the faculty and students at Harvard College.

Whitefield was held in highest esteem by people of all classes in Boston. The poor and the unlettered loved him, and the clergy and magistrates extended him every courtesy and consideration. Among the foremost to do him

³⁰Ibid., pages 454-456

³¹Ibid., page 462

honor was the royal governor of Boston, Jonathan Belcher. There was one notable and humorous exception. On Whitefield's arrival in Boston, where he had not yet preached, he met, while walking through the streets, Dr. Timothy Cutler, the distinguished pastor of Boston's Christ Church. Recognizing each other at once, Doctor Cutler remarked, "I am sorry to see you here." Whitefield replied, "And so is the devil."³²

During the period between September 29 and October 6, Whitefield itinerated through the New England countryside, and when he returned to Boston on October 7 he had ridden one hundred and seventy eight miles and preached seventeen times. His second visit to Boston lasted only six days but he preached daily and the response was overwhelming. He delivered his farewell sermon on Boston Common on Sunday, October 12, to an audience estimated at twenty thousand.

During the spring of 1740 Gilbert Tennent had preached his famous sermon in Nottingham, Maryland, on the subject, "The Dangers of An Unconverted Ministry" which was a terrible blast at those ministers who opposed the revival. Tennent described the generality of ministers of that generation as "letter-learned Pharisees, plastered hypocrites, having the form of godliness, but destitute of its power." He told the people that the reason why they had seen so few cases of conviction and conversion among them was that "the bulk of their spiritual guides were stone blind and stone dead."³³

Evidently Whitefield had hesitated to give expression to these views which he and the Log College group held in common, but after Tennent had taken the lead Whitefield followed. During his second visit to Boston, on October 9,

³²Wakeley, J. B., Anecdotes of the Rev. George Whitefield, page 142

³³Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. I, page 327

he spoke in Dr. Sewell's meeting-house on the subject of "unconverted ministers." The following resumé of his thought on the subject is given in his Journal:

The Lord enabled me to open my mouth boldly against unconverted ministers; for, I am persuaded, the generality of preachers talk of an unknown and unfelt Christ. The reason why congregations have been so dead is, because they have had dead men preaching to them. O that the Lord may quicken and revive them! How can dead men beget living children? It is true, indeed, that God may convert men by the devil, if He chooses; and so He may by unconverted ministers; but, I believe, He seldom makes use of either of them for this purpose. No! He chooses vessels made meet by the operations of His blessed Spirit.³⁴

This censorious spirit, once expressed, was not quickly forsaken; on the contrary, it became typical of Whitefield and his fellow revivalists. As far as Whitefield was personally concerned, it not only marred his preaching but ultimately placed him at odds with a substantial part of the clergy and thus did positive harm to the cause of Christ.

On October 13 Whitefield left Boston; he journeyed by way of Concord, Worcester, Brookfield, and other towns, to Northampton, drawn thither by the fame of the revivals under Edwards. Whitefield described Edwards as "a solid, excellent Christian, but, at present, weak in body." He remained only a few days in Northampton but preached five times; his visit there though brief fanned the embers of the Edwardian revival, and as a result religious zeal quickly burst into flames. This renewal of enthusiasm continued strong and aggressive for the next two years.

Leaving Northampton Whitefield went on his way preaching at Westfield, Springfield, East Windsor, Hartford, Wethersfield, and Middletown, staying only a few hours at each place but remaining nearly three days at New Haven

³⁴Whitefield, G., Journals, edited by W. Wale, page 471

where he addressed the students on "the dreadful ill consequences of an unconverted ministry." He was then on his way to New York.

Everywhere Whitefield had gone in New England his audiences were profoundly moved. Under his oratory they were "melted"; men wept, women fainted, and numbers professed conversion. Never in the entire history of New England was a preacher possessed of such popular influence or received with such unbounded adoration by the community at large.

Whitefield persuaded Gilbert Tennent to act as his successor in Boston and in the province of New England generally. Tennent's ministry in New Jersey had been greatly blessed, and in New England it proved to be scarcely less successful than that of Whitefield. By the spring and summer of 1741 the revival was in full tide and continued unabated through the spring of 1742. The whole of New England was ablaze with religious zeal. Many ministers were engaged in itinerant evangelism; the most conspicuous of these were the Rev. Messrs. Jonathan Parsons of Lyme, Benjamin Pomeroy of Hebron, Eleazer Wheelock of Labanon, Joseph Bellamy, and John Graham of Southbury in Connecticut, and Jonathan Edwards of Northampton in Massachusetts. In Boston alone, thirty religious societies were organized, and ministers not only preached in crowded churches, but also preached in private homes almost every night.³⁵

In The Middle Colonies

Whitefield arrived in New York on October 30, 1740, for a four day visit. While there he preached twice a day, usually in Mr. Pemberton's meeting-house. The attendance upon his services was excellent, and there was as Whitefield states "a great and gracious melting among the people."

³⁵Walker, Williston, Op. Cit., pages 256-258.

During the New York visit, Whitefield wrote an answer to the Querists which was shortly published and widely circulated. The Querists were anti-revivalists, principally of Presbyterian persuasion, who had become critical and distrustful of Whitefield personally as well as of the cause for which he stood. This group had written and published a tract of thirty-two pages containing extracts from some of Whitefield's printed sermons, journals, and letters with questions raised on each extract. The tract was primarily concerned with doctrinal matters, and Whitefield in giving answer to it, manfully acknowledged his inconsistencies and errors and promised to alter them in the next edition of his writings. He did state, however, that he thought it unfair that he should be held personally accountable for the emotional excesses of some of his adherents. Furthermore, he denied the accusation that he had laid aside reading and sought to justify his practice of preaching extempore. He concluded his reply by reminding his adversaries that his one design was to bring poor souls to Jesus Christ.³⁶

On November 3 he left New York and arrived five days later in Philadelphia. On Sunday, November 9, he preached in the "New Building" which his friends were constructing to function both as a meeting-house and as a charity school. At the time of Whitefield's arrival, the structure was roofless, but he preached in it twice each day for a week, except one morning when there was so much snow within the walls that he was obliged to conduct services elsewhere and used the Presbyterian meeting-house. His preaching in Philadelphia was immensely popular just as it had been on all previous visits. He relates in his Journal that almost every day many were convicted of sin, and that during

³⁶Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M. A., Vol. IV, pages 43-49. The author possesses a micro-film of an original pamphlet written by Samuel Blair defending Whitefield against the Querists, printed by B. Franklin, found in the Curtis Collection, Univ. of Pennsylvania.

his last absence several Societies had been formed "not only of men and women, but of little boys and little girls."

On Monday, November 17, he bade adieu to his Philadelphia friends and proceeded to Savannah. On the way he preached at Gloucester, Greenwich, Piles Grove, Cohansie, Salem, Newcastle, Whiteclay Creek, Fagg's Manor, Nottingham, Bohemia, St. George's, Reedy Island, and Charleston.³⁷

In Georgia and South Carolina

When Whitefield arrived at Savannah on Saturday, December 13, 1740, he had been absent from his parishioners eighteen weeks and had preached nearly two hundred times. He spent Christmas in the Orphan House but left there on New Year's Day, 1741, for Charleston where he arrived January 4. There he spent the next two weeks preaching twice each day. On January 16 he embarked for England.³⁸

Sources of Whitefield's Power

Now that the account of Whitefield's famous second visit to America has been given, the author feels that some attempt should be made to explain the young evangelist's wide popularity and success. Here we have a young clergyman, only twenty-five years of age, who in a matter of months had renewed the fires of religious fervor in Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and New England. Men and women by the thousands had become eager for a deeper understanding of and experience in the Christian faith. Under his leadership, the scattered revivals of a few years previous had been renewed and expanded so that in 1739 and 1740 a truly "great awakening" had been begun in the American

³⁷Whitefield, G., Journals, edited by W. Wale, pages 488-502

³⁸Ibid., pages 502-509

colonies. What was it that qualified this young evangelist in such a unique way to accomplish so great a task?

One of Whitefield's most valuable endowments was his voice with its musical quality and tremendous power. Mrs. Jonathan Edwards, a highly educated and cultured lady, was especially impressed by his voice during his first visit to Northampton, and in a letter to her brother James made the following comments:

He is truly a remarkable man, and during his visit, has, I think, verified all that we have heard of him. He makes less of the doctrines than our American preachers generally do, and aims more at affecting the heart. He is a born orator. You have already heard of his deep-toned, yet clear and melodious, voice. It is perfect music. It is wonderful to see what a spell he casts over an audience by proclaiming the simplest truths of the Bible. I have seen upwards of a thousand people hang on his words with breathless silence, broken only by an occasional half-suppressed sob. He impresses the ignorant, and not less the educated and refined.³⁹

The power and endurance of his voice were truly astonishing for he often preached to vast audiences outdoors, frequently twice and sometimes three times on a given day. There is no record of his voice ever failing, and it is fair to assume that it never did. Having heard of Whitefield's preaching in England to audiences numbering as many as twenty-five thousand people assembled in the open fields, the astute mind of Benjamin Franklin was challenged to conduct an experiment to determine the maximum number of people Whitefield could address at one time. Here is Franklin's account of the experiment and his conclusion:

He had a loud and clear voice, and articulated his words so perfectly that he might be heard and understood at a great distance, especially as his auditories observed the most perfect silence. He preached one evening from the top of the Court House steps, which are in the middle of Market Street, and on the west side of Second Street, which

³⁹Wakeley, J. B., Op. Cit., page 278

crosses it at right angles. Both streets were filled with his hearers to a considerable distance. Being among the hindmost in Market Street, I had the curiosity to learn how far he could be heard, by retiring backwards down the street towards the river, and I found his voice distinct till I came near Front Street, when some noise in that street obscured it. Imagining then a semicircle, of which my distance should be the radius, and that it was filled with auditors, to each of whom I allowed two square feet, I computed that he might well be heard by more than thirty thousand. This reconciled me to the newspaper accounts of his having preached to twenty-five thousand in the fields.⁴⁰

Another source of Whitefield's power is found in his dramatic appeal. David Garrick, the great contemporary actor, once remarked that if Whitefield were on the stage he could make an audience weep or tremble by his very utterance of the word "Mesopotamia." In his preaching, the dramatic touch was present in everything that he said, in the way he said it, and in the gestures he used to illustrate it. As Clarence Macartney states in his book, Six Kings of the American Pulpit, Whitefield's preaching was acting in the noblest sense.⁴¹ There were favorite sayings which he repeated over and over again in the pulpit. One of them which he used with great power was the noble apostrophe of Jeremiah: "O earth, earth, earth, hear the word of the Lord!" It never failed to electrify a crowd. As he preached, he frequently painted pictures with his words; his description of Peter's remorse after his denial of Christ serves as an example:

Methinks I see him wringing his hands, rending his garments, stamping on the ground, and, with the self-condemned publican, smiting his breast. See how it heaves! O what piteous sighs and groans are those which come from the very bottom of his heart! Alas! it is too big to speak; but his tears, his briny, bitter, repenting tears, plainly bespeak this to be the language of his awakened soul. "Alas! where have I been? On the devil's

⁴⁰Franklin, B., Op. Cit., page 121.

⁴¹Macartney, Clarence, Six Kings of The American Pulpit, page 32.

ground. With whom have I been conversing? The devil's children. What is this that I have done? Denied the Lord of glory; with oaths and curses denied that I ever knew him. And now whither shall I go, or where shall I hide my guilty head? I have sinned against light, I have sinned against repeated tokens of his dear, distinguishing and heavenly love. I have sinned against repeated warnings, resolutions, promises, vows. I have sinned openly in the face of sun, and in the presence of my Master's enemies, and thereby have caused his name to be blasphemed. How can I think to be suffered to behold the face of, much less to be employed by, the ever-blessed Jesus any more? O Peter! thou hast undone thyself. Justly mayest thou be thrown aside like a broken vessel. God be merciful to me a sinner!⁴²

As important as his voice and dramatic ability were to his ministry, the most significant source of his power has yet to be delineated. It is found in this fact: Whitefield was a man with a simple, but vital message, that of regeneration, and he preached it passionately yet in the spirit of love. When Whitefield was a student at Oxford, Charles Wesley put into his hands a book by Henry Scougal entitled, The Life Of God In The Soul Of Man. This gave him his first idea of the religious life as a real union with God, and he strove for that great power and blessing until he possessed it. After his personal regeneration, it was his supreme desire that every soul should have that gracious experience. He was, therefore, forever faithful to preach the gospel truths which would lead men into the new birth. He declared in no uncertain tone the fall of man, his unregenerate state of heart, and the necessity of regeneration.

The secret of his power lay not in the mere pronouncement of these great truths but also in the great love that he had for souls. When he saw a congregation assembled for a service, he was moved with compassion, and when he preached the people were made conscious of his love and concern for their souls.

⁴²Ibid., page 38.

His frequent prayer was, "O Lord, grant me a warm heart!" Surely God answered his prayer.

Third Visit--The Great Awakening Continued But With
Serious Opposition

During Whitefield's absence from America January 16, 1741--October 26, 1744, two events occurred of special significance to his evangelistic efforts in America: the organization of the Second Presbyterian Church in Philadelphia, and the publication in Boston of a book entitled, Seasonable Thoughts On The State Of Religion in New England.

The organization in Philadelphia of the Second Presbyterian Church in 1743 was of particular interest to Whitefield, for its charter membership consisted of one hundred and forty men and women who had been influenced by his Philadelphia preaching. This faithful group had worshipped regularly for more than two years in the "New Building," which was constructed to be used by Whitefield and other itinerant ministers of the gospel for their preaching services. Gilbert Tennent was chosen as the first pastor of the newly formed church, and he was duly installed early in the year 1744. Quite naturally the organization of this fine church and the selection of Gilbert Tennent as pastor were sources of deep satisfaction to Whitefield.⁴³

The book, mentioned above, Seasonable Thoughts On The State Of Religion in New England, published in Boston in 1743, was written by Dr. Charles Chauncy. The author was one of the most distinguished and influential ministers in New England. He was born in Boston in 1705, educated at Harvard College, and

⁴³Anderson, Charles A., manager of the Presbyterian Historical Society, Philadelphia, Letter to Rev. J. Frank Alexander, Jr.

ordained pastor of the First Congregational Church of Boston in 1727. He was eminent for his learning, was an ardent advocate for civil and religious liberties for the colonies, and strongly objected to State Church establishments.

Dr. Chauncy's four hundred and fifty-four page book was a general attack on the revival in New England, and Whitefield is the most prominent target of his criticism. The book condemned itinerant preaching and pointed out that the Assembly of Connecticut had passed an act restraining both ordained ministers and licensed candidates from preaching in other men's parishes without their and their church's consent and wholly prohibiting the exhortations of illiterate laymen. Whitefield was criticized for his frequent references to "unconverted ministers" which tended to arouse suspicion against the ministry. He was further censured for the "confusion" that had occurred in some of the houses of worship: some screaming out in distress and anguish; some praying; others singing; some jumping up and down, while others were exhorting; some lying on the floor, and others walking and talking.

It is true that during Whitefield's residence in England, the American revival had been disgraced by many scenes of fanatical confusion, but it was unfair to attribute this to Whitefield. In An Account of the Revival of Religion in Boston, in 1740-1743, by Thomas Prince, one of the pastors of the Old South Church, the following testimony is given by the Rev. Dr. Colman: "I do not remember any crying out, or falling down, or fainting, either under Mr. Whitefield's or Mr. Tennent's ministry, all the while they were in Boston, though many were in great concern of soul."

Dr. Chauncy enumerated six dangerous errors prevailing among the people, and expanded on each. This is his list: (1) the supposition that ministers, if not converted, are incapable of being instruments of spiritual good to men's souls; (2) a presumptuous dependence on the Spirit so that learning is despised;

(3) making assurance essential to conversion; (4) connecting a knowledge of the time of conversion with conversion itself, as though there could not be one without the other; (5) vilifying of good works; (6) decrying sanctification as an evidence of justification.

A list of nearly eight hundred subscribers, including four governors of colonies, twenty-seven "honourables," and a hundred and forty-seven "reverends" was prefixed to Dr. Chauncy's work. His book was widely read and dealt a serious blow to the New England Awakening.

There are certain personal events which took place in Whitefield's life during his absence from America which should be stated at this point. Although these events do not bear directly upon the subject of Whitefield's evangelistic effort in America, they are nevertheless of common interest. Whitefield was married on November 14, 1741, to the former Elizabeth James at St. Martin's Chapel, near Caerphilly in Wales. At the time of their marriage, Whitefield was twenty-six years of age, and she a widow of thirty-six. Mrs. Whitefield had been a close friend of the Methodists and of Wesley; Whitefield described her as "neither rich in fortune, nor beautiful as to her person, but, I believe, a true child of God." Their union was blessed with one child, a boy born in October 1743. Whitefield baptized his son in the Tabernacle in London and entertained hopes of his one day becoming a minister and preaching "the unsearchable riches of Christ." The child, however, died in February, 1744, at Gloucester in the Bell Inn where his father was born.⁴⁴

Whitefield's third visit to America began when he landed at York, New England on October 26, 1744, in the company of his wife. The voyage had been long, rough, and dangerous, and when Whitefield's ship was near the port of

⁴⁴Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. I, pages 530-533, Vol. II, pages 85-86.

York a fishing schooner approached and offered to take some of the passengers to York and thus hasten their arrival by several hours. Whitefield, his wife, and several others accepted the offer, but the pilot missed the inlet and the schooner was tossed about all night. Whitefield's hunger was such, that, to use his own expression he "could have gnawed the very boards." The fishermen had nothing but potatoes to offer the passengers, and Whitefield eagerly devoured them. About half an hour after his arrival at York, he "was put to bed, racked with a nervous colic, and convulsed from his waist down to his toes." His life was in danger for four days, but as soon as his pain abated, he preached at York and then crossed the ferry to Portsmouth where he suffered a relapse. Three physicians attended him and pronounced him dangerously ill, but when the hour arrived when he was scheduled to preach he felt relieved of pain and insisted on conducting the service. This indiscretion almost cost him his life, for after the preaching service, he was returned to his bed and remained there quite ill for some days.⁴⁵

As soon as he was able to travel again he proceeded to Boston, and though weak began preaching immediately after his arrival. By November 24, he had preached in several of Boston's largest houses of worship including that of Dr. Colman, Dr. Sewell, Mr. Webb, and Mr. Gee as well as having preached at Chelsea, Malden, and several other towns. Then for the next several months, he remained in Boston and its neighborhood, occupied partly in writing pamphlets and sermons for the press and partly in preaching.⁴⁶

During January, 1745, Whitefield published a reply to Dr. Chauncy's book, Seasonable Thoughts On The State Of Religion in New England. The reply was

⁴⁵Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M. A., Vol. II, pages 68-71.

⁴⁶Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. II, pages 120-123.

written in the form of a lengthy letter, though printed as a pamphlet, dated Portsmouth, Piscataqua, November 19, 1744, and was accompanied by a preface dated Boston, January 18, 1745. The spirit of Whitefield's reply is thoroughly Christian, and wherever he defends himself he does it most successfully. He confesses that he was wrong when he said, "Many, nay, most of the New England preachers did not experimentally know Christ." He concluded his letter with the following paragraph:

I write this under the immediate views of a happy eternity; and rejoice in the prospect of that day, wherein I shall appear before a compassionate Judge, who will cover all my infirmities with the mantle of His everlasting righteousness, and graciously accept my poor and weak efforts to promote His kingdom. I beg, reverend sir, an interest in your prayers, that I may glorify God, whether by life or death; and, praying that you may be taught of God to preach the truth as it is in Jesus, turn many to righteousness, and shine in the kingdom of heaven, as the stars in the firmament, for ever and ever, I subscribe myself, reverend and dear sir, your most affectionate, humble servant,
George Whitefield⁴⁷

A large portion of Whitefield's time during the early months of 1745 was employed in answering attacks made upon him from numerous sources. His return to America in October, 1744, had provoked the outbreak of a paper warfare against him. Resolutions hostile to Whitefield were adopted, printed, and circulated by various associations of ministers. The letters of individual ministers giving their reasons for declining to admit him into their pulpits found their way into the presses. On December 28, 1744, a testimony was released from the president, professors, tutors, and Hebrew instructor of Harvard College against Whitefield and his conduct. This was followed on February 25, 1745, by a declaration from the faculty of Yale College. Most of these denunciations consisted largely of restatements of attacks already made by Dr. Chauncy.

⁴⁷Ibid., Vol. II, pages 129-130. (Oddly enough, Whitefield's reply to Dr. Chauncy is not included in his collected works.)

A few pamphlets and letters were published in Whitefield's defense, but the hostile writings greatly outnumbered the friendly ones. Whitefield repeatedly answered the charges made against him, but the attacks continued unabated. His reactions to this literary storm is perhaps best registered in a letter he wrote in Boston, February 19, 1745, in which he exclaims:

A confederacy, a confederacy! The clergy, amongst whom are a few mistaken, misinformed good old men, are publishing halfpenny testimonials against me. Even the president, professors, and tutors, of Harvard College, where, some few years ago, I was received with such uncommon respect, have joined the confederacy. The testimonials have done me real service. I certainly did drop some unguarded expressions in the heat of less experienced youth; and was too precipitate in hearkening to, and publishing private information. Some good friends are publishing testimonials in my favour. Thus you see what a militant state we are in at present. Amidst all, the word runs, and is glorified. Many are so enraged at the treatment I meet with, that they came to me lately, assuring me that, if I will consent, they will erect, in a few weeks' time, the outside of the largest place of worship in America; but, you know, ceiled houses were never my aim. I, therefore, thanked them for their kind offer; but begged leave to refuse accepting it. How or when the present storm will subside is uncertain. I can only, at present, beg the continuance of your prayers, that, I may be kept in good temper towards those, who, I believe, really think they do God's service by opposing me.⁴⁸

The conditions under which Whitefield preached in Boston during the winter of 1745 were unusual to say the least. A host of laymen, finding their ministers prejudiced against Whitefield, had their congregations invite him to preach in their pulpits. Moreover, they petitioned him to conduct a daily service at six o'clock in the morning lecturing on Biblical themes. Whitefield complied with their request, but did not expect large audiences at such an early hour and therefore scheduled the services in one of the smallest meeting-houses. Such great numbers flocked to hear, however, that he was obliged to

⁴⁸ Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M.A.
Vol. II, page 76

use two of the largest places of worship, and his congregations soon numbered between two and three thousand. Thus in Boston where the ministers had joined in denouncing him, it was remarkable to see so many hundreds of men and women walking or riding to hear "the gospel rover" deliver lectures at six o'clock on cold wintry mornings.

On March 12 we find Whitefield at Piscataqua, sixty miles from Boston, where he wrote the following letter to a friend in London:

This comes by a young gentleman, who expects to return to South Carolina in August next. By him, I send you one of each of the pamphlets I have published here. I would have them sent to Scotland as soon as may be. America is pleasanter and pleasanter every day. The door for preaching opens wider and wider. I am preparing my sermons for the press, and am also writing another journal. You shall have them the first opportunity. I wrote to you last week, and sent about fifty letters, by Captain Darling.⁴⁹

On July 29, 1745, Whitefield was in Boston again, and after that date it is impossible for want of materials to trace his course closely for the next twelve months. John Gillies in his Memoirs of Whitefield, says, "As his bodily strength increased, he began to move farther southward; and, after preaching eastward as far as Casco Bay and North Yarmouth, he went through Connecticut, Plymouth, and Rhode Island, preaching to thousands, generally twice a day." Whitefield himself further added to the record of his activity when he wrote the following:

Though there was much smoke, yet every day I had convincing proof that a blessed gospel fire had been kindled in the hearts both of ministers and people. At New York, I found that the seed sown had sprung up abundantly; and also at the east end of Long Island. In my way to Philadelphia, I had the pleasure of preaching, by an interpreter, to some converted Indians, and of seeing near fifty young ones in a school near Freehold, learning the Assembly's catechism. A blessed awakening had been begun among the Delaware Indians, by the instrumentality of Mr. David

⁴⁹Ibid., Vol. II, page 148.

Brainerd. Mr. William Tennent seemed to encourage his endeavours with all his heart. I found Mr. Gilbert Tennent, in Philadelphia, settled in the place erected at the beginning of the awakening. The gentlemen offered me £ 800 per annum, only to preach among them six months in the year, leaving me at liberty to travel the other six months where I would.⁵⁰

The offer made to him in Philadelphia was in September, 1745, but beyond that we do not know where and how he spent the remainder of the year.

On January 1, 1746, Whitefield was at Bethesda in Georgia where he remained for three months. Then from March to August, 1746, hardly anything is known of his wanderings. He seems, however, to have visited New York in April and to have found favor among the people. On Sunday, August 24, 1746, he was in Philadelphia where the news of the Jacobite defeat at the Battle of Culloden had recently been received; on this Sunday, he delivered a patriotic sermon entitled, "Britain's Mercies, and Britain's Duty."⁵¹

By November 8, 1746, Whitefield had spent at least a month in Maryland preaching to large congregations in seven different counties. There are no details of his labors in Maryland; he simply states that almost everywhere he went people flocked to hear, and his preaching was blessed.⁵²

After having sent his wife in the company of a young lady to Georgia, Whitefield started for Virginia on November 8, 1746. He had visited briefly in Virginia in 1739 and found religion under the auspices of the Anglican Church at a very low ebb. Since that visit, however, the state of religion had improved considerably under the influence of the Great Awakening, especially the middle colony phase of it. Around 1740 in Hanover County Samuel Morris, a

⁵⁰ Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. II, pages 152-153

⁵¹ Ibid., Vol. II, pages 153, 162-163. The sermon is included in Whitefield's Works, Vol. V, pages 79-93

⁵² Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M.A., Vol. II, page 85

planter, became interested in certain religious writings which had fallen into his hands and began to hold gatherings in homes of his neighbors where passages from these writings were read. Among them were some of Whitefield's sermons, Bunyan's Pilgrim Progress, and Luther's Commentary On Galatians. Soon private homes became too small to accommodate the attendance, and "reading houses" were erected. Morris was invited to read sermons at considerable distances, "and by this means a concern was propagated."

It was then that William Robinson appeared in Hanover County; he was a former student in William Tennent's Log College, and had been sent into Virginia by the New Side Presbyterians. His awakening type of preaching started a wave of revivalism among those who had already been aroused by Morris. Robinson's preaching marks the beginning of revivalistic Presbyterianism in the South.

The movement was further aided by the visitation and evangelistic effort of such Log College men as John Blair, John Roan, Samuel Finley, Samuel Blair, and Gilbert Tennent. Finally in 1748, Samuel Davies was called as pastor of the congregations in Hanover and adjoining counties.⁵³

Whitefield visited Hanover County in November, 1746; unfortunately, he left no account of his ministry in this section. All that is known is contained in the following sentence, written by Samuel Morris, the lay-revivalist:

Mr. Whitefield came and preached four or five days, which was the happy means of giving us further encouragement, and of engaging others to the Lord, especially among the Church people, who received the gospel more readily from him than from ministers of the Presbyterian denomination.⁵⁴

From Virginia, Whitefield proceeded to Georgia. He remained there until March 21, 1747, when he returned to Maryland, reaching Bohemia April 27. He

⁵³Sweet, W.W., Religion In Colonial America, pages 294-295

⁵⁴Gillies, J., Historical Collections, Vol. II, pages 333

preached thirty times in Maryland and journeyed four hundred miles. During June and July, he visited Philadelphia and New York where he preached frequently though quite ill with colic and fever. He arrived in Boston July 20, and before leaving New England he preached in Portsmouth, York, Newbury, Exeter, and Durham.

Returning southward, he preached in New York August 27-31 and then in Philadelphia until September 11. By September 17 he was in Bohemia, Maryland, and after spending a few days there proceeded through Virginia to Bath-Town, North Carolina, then to Wilmington, Cape Fear, Charleston, and to Savannah.

Whitefield remained in the South until March 6, 1748, when he sailed from Charleston to Bermuda en route to England. He left his wife at Bethesda with the intention of returning to her and his American labors in the fall of the year. His return to America was considerably delayed, and Mrs. Whitefield finally joined her husband in England during the month of June, 1749.

Whitefield landed at Bermuda on March 15 and spent eleven weeks there, usually preaching once and sometimes twice a day. He preached in the churches, in the Presbyterian meeting-house, in mansions, in cottages, and in the open air. Colonel Gilbert lent him a horse during his stay, and the gentlemen subscribed more than £ 100 sterling for his Orphan House. His pleasant and profitable visit in Bermuda ended on June 2 when he embarked for England.⁵⁵

On June 24, 1748, when approaching the end of his voyage to England, Whitefield wrote a letter to a friend in which he admits his mistakes of the past. Certainly he is to be admired for this general confession, and in justice to his character, the following excerpt is quoted:

Alas, alas! In how many things have I judged and acted wrongly! I have been too rash and hasty in giving characters,

⁵⁵Tyerman, L. Op. Cit., Vol. II, pages 167, 181, and 226. Also see Gillies, J., Memoirs of the Life of the Reverend George Whitefield, Chapter XIII

both of places and persons. Being fond of Scripture language, I have often used a style too apostolical; and, at the same time, I have been too bitter in my zeal. Wild-fire has been mixed with it; and I frequently wrote and spoke in my own spirit, when I thought I was writing and speaking by the Spirit of God. I have, likewise, too much made impressions my rule of acting; and have published too soon, and too explicitly, what had been better told after my death. By these things, I have hurt the blessed cause I would defend, and have stirred up needless opposition.⁵⁶

Apart from his first visit, Whitefield had now spent about four and a half years in itinerant preaching in America. His second and third visits had covered the major part of the Great Awakening.

Fourth Visit--Interrupted by Orphan House Business

Whitefield's fourth visit to America was of short duration; he landed in October, 1751, and seven months afterwards was again in England. Very little is known of his activity while in the colonies, but his time seems to have been spent chiefly in Georgia and South Carolina. He intended to travel "northward" and to "the Bermudas," but these plans were disrupted when he suddenly embarked for England. The necessity for this voyage is explained in the following extract from a letter which Whitefield wrote at Portsmouth, England, May 21, 1752:

God has vouchsafed to bless me in respect to the Orphan House, in a very unexpected manner. To put it upon a proper footing, and to apply for some privileges, before the time of the Trustees' Charter be expired, is what has called me home so speedily.⁵⁷

Fifth Visit--Restored To Favor In New England, And Further Participation In The Virginia Awakening

Whitefield brought twenty English orphans with him when he returned to America in 1754 for his fifth visit. He and his "orphan-charge" landed at

⁵⁶Ibid., Vol. II, page 183.

⁵⁷Ibid., Vol. II, page 279.

Beaufort, South Carolina, May 26, and proceeded to Bethesda, in Georgia. After a short stay at the Orphan House, he returned to Charleston and soon made an excursion to the northern colonies.

Almost seven years had elapsed since Whitefield had last visited Boston, New York, and Philadelphia. Fortunately, time had dulled the intense prejudice which many ministers and laypeople had demonstrated during the years 1744-1747. His return, therefore, in 1754 did not precipitate any organised opposition; instead, his enemies remained silent and inactive, and his friends heartily welcomed his return.

He arrived at New York July 27 and preached backwards and forwards from New York to Philadelphia until the middle of September. During the latter part of September, he was present at New Jersey College where the president, Aaron Burr, and the trustees conferred the A.M. degree upon him. On October 1 he set out with President Burr for Boston where on October 9 he began preaching for a week. He used the Old North Church and the New North Church, usually in the mornings at seven, addressing about three thousand people daily. By October 24 he had traveled north as far as Portsmouth, New Hampshire. On November 7 he took leave of his friends in Boston and proceeded to Rhode Island and to Maryland.⁵⁸

He spent Christmas, 1754, in Maryland, and wrote from Bohemia on December 27 stating that in the past five months he had traveled nearly two thousand miles and had preached about two hundred and thirty times.

Early in January, 1755, he made his way to Virginia. Since Whitefield's last visit, the Rev. Samuel Davies had labored there with self-consuming

⁵⁸ Gillies, J., Memoirs of the Life of the Reverend George Whitefield
Chapter XVI

earnestness, making his home at Hanover, about twelve miles from Richmond. As early as 1748, Davies had assembled seven congregations; some of them, however, were forty miles distant from each other. His eloquent, faithful, and powerful preaching had been bitterly opposed by the Established Church, but his efforts had met with considerable success.⁵⁹ The question as to whether the Toleration Act passed by the British Parliament in 1689 applied to Virginia had not been determined and was raised again and again in the early days of Davies' ministry. Acting as his own attorney, Davies argued the question before the General Court with the Attorney General, Peyton Randolph, as his opponent and won a decision favorable to the Dissenters. Hanover Presbytery was formed in 1755 with Davies as the first moderator; this marks the beginning of organized Presbyterianism in the southern colonies.⁶⁰

Under these altered circumstances, Whitefield met with a most favorable reception. The rich and the poor, plantation owners and common laborers were eager to hear him; some traveled forty miles or more to attend his services. Several persons came to him and acknowledged what God had done for their souls through his preaching when he was there previously. On January 17, while on the borders of North Carolina, Whitefield expressed in a letter his regret that he could not tarry longer in Virginia, for he believed that a wide and effectual door had been opened there.

There is no record of Whitefield's ride from Virginia to Georgia; neither is there any information concerning his activity while in Georgia. On February 26, he returned to Charleston where on March 27 he embarked for England.⁶¹

⁵⁹Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. II, page 338.

⁶⁰Sweet, W. W., Revivalism in America, page 36.

⁶¹Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. II, page 339.

Sixth Visit--A Sick Man Itinerating

The Peace of Paris, February 10, 1763, ended the Seven Years' War. This bitter strife had kept Whitefield confined in England and Scotland for eight long years and with each passing year his anxieties for the Orphan House and his friends in America had mounted. After peace was declared, he hastily planned a voyage to America, and early in June he was on the high seas.

Unfortunately, Whitefield was not physically equal to the tasks which lay before him. During a visit to Bristol, early in 1761, he contracted a cold which so seriously affected his health that he was completely disabled during the months of March and April. Although he made a reasonable recovery, he was a semi-invalid for the next year.⁶²

Even when his ship arrived off the coast of Virginia in September, 1763, he remained a sick man. He was then nearing his forty-ninth birthday, and was prematurely old for his years. From the time of his admission to deacons' orders in 1736 to the present he had had one consuming passion--to save souls; and attempting to do that, he had driven himself mercilessly. His friends now urged him to preach less often, but he always replied, "I had rather wear out than to rust out."

Despite the zeal in his heart, his pace was nevertheless slackened by his enfeebled condition. As soon as he left the ship in Virginia, he set out northward for a cooler climate. He reached Philadelphia September 22, and remained two months there as an invalid among his old acquaintances, preaching sometimes as often as twice a week. He visited New Jersey College during this time and was much encouraged with the emphasis on religion there. By December 1,

⁶²Ibid., Vol. II, pages 441-442.

he had traveled to New York where he remained for two months preaching as often as his health would permit, sometimes three times a week. His congregations in New York were very large and his ministry highly respected, as shown in the following news item which appeared in the Boston Gazette:

New York, January 23, 1764. The Rev. Mr. George Whitefield has spent seven weeks with us, preaching twice a week, with more general acceptance than ever. He has been treated with great respect by many of the gentlemen and merchants of this place.⁶³

Leaving New York, he set out for New England and on his way preached in Long Island, Shelter Island, and other places. On arrival at Boston, about February 13, he received a hearty welcome, not only from his friends of former years but also from the people in general. On February 13, 1761, while in London, he had preached twice in the Tabernacle and once at Tottenham Court Road and each time had asked for contributions for two purposes: the relief of German Protestants plundered in the March of Brandenburg; and the relief of the inhabitants of Boston where a fire had destroyed nearly four hundred homes. The collections at these services totaled £ 560 sterling. The people of Boston were grateful for the material aid he had provided and officially expressed their appreciation. Thus the following:

Boston, February 20. Monday last, at a very general meeting of the freeholders and other inhabitants of this town, it was voted unanimously that the thanks of the town be given to the Rev. Mr. George Whitefield, for his charitable care and pains in collecting a considerable sum of money in Great Britain, for the benefit of the distressed sufferers by the great fire in Boston, 1760. And a respectable committee was appointed to wait on Mr. Whitefield, to inform him of the vote, and present him with a copy thereof; which committee waited upon him accordingly, and received the following answer:--

Gentlemen,--This vote of thanks for so small an instance of my goodwill to Boston, as it was entirely unexpected, quite surprises me. Often have I been much concerned that

⁶³Ibid., Vol. II, page 471.

I could do no more upon such a distressing occasion. That the Redeemer may ever preserve the town from such-like melancholy events, and sanctify the present afflictive circumstances to the spiritual welfare of all its inhabitants, is the hearty prayer of,

Gentlemen, your ready servant in our common Lord,
George Whitefield⁶⁴

Whitefield had endeared himself to the people of Boston by his simple, philanthropic act performed thousands of miles from the scene of their tragedy. With one stroke of benevolence, he had overcome the prejudice of many, and as a result invitations to preach came thick and fast to him from all quarters.

Early in March, 1764, he began a New England preaching tour which required nearly seven weeks. He returned to Boston April 20 and resumed his ministry there April 24. His health was somewhat improved, and, at the urging of his congregations, he agreed to deliver a series of lectures in the mornings at six o'clock just as he had done for them in 1745.

He left Boston around the middle of June and by June 25 had arrived in New York. His health continued to improve, and besides preaching in the chapels of New York he preached twice in the open air. Towards the end of September, he went to Philadelphia where he preached at the commencement of a new term of the College of Philadelphia. On September 25, he wrote a letter to his old friend Wesley saying he had been "mercifully carried through the summer's heat," and was waiting for cooler weather before proceeding to Georgia; then he stated that had his strength permitted he might have preached to thousands and thousands each day. He remained in Philadelphia until October 21 when he began his long journey through Virginia, North and South Carolina, to Georgia.

He arrived at Bethesda early in December and for almost three months was busily employed in administering accumulated Orphan House business. He sailed

⁶⁴Lloyd's "Evening Post," April 16, 1764.

from Charleston on March 17 for Philadelphia; from there he went to New York where he embarked for England on June 9.

Seventh Visit--A Final Circuit And Death

Whitefield, in the company of Cornelius Winter and Richard Smith, landed in Charleston on Thursday, November 30, 1769, for his seventh and final visit to America.⁶⁵ He remained in Charleston for the next ten days, preaching daily to the delight and profit of large congregations. He and his companions set sail in an open boat for Savannah on December 10 and arrived there December 14.

At the beginning of the year 1770, Whitefield was at his beloved Orphan House. His health was better than it had been for years, and he spent a month, from early February to early March, preaching almost every day in Charleston. Then he returned to the Orphan House and remained there until late in April, when he started on his old preaching circuit in the North.

He arrived in Philadelphia on Sunday, May 6. After being there three weeks, he wrote:

People of all ranks flock as much as ever. Impressions are made on many, and, I trust, they will abide. To all the Episcopal Churches, as well as to most of the other places of worship, I have free access. My health is preserved; and though I preach twice on the Lord's-day, and three or four times a week besides, I am rather better than I have been for many years. This is the Lord's doings. To Him be all the glory!⁶⁶

His next three weeks, May 24-June 14, were spent in preaching on a hundred and fifty mile circuit near Philadelphia. Invitations crowded in upon

⁶⁵Mrs. Whitefield died in England August 9, 1769, during an attack of fever. Her husband, who was present in England at the time, preached her funeral sermon.

⁶⁶Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. II, page 589

him, and the vigor of his youth seemed to be renewed as he traveled from place to place. He arrived in New York on Saturday, June 23, and spent a week preaching to tremendous congregations.

During the month of July, he traveled five hundred miles, and was able to preach every day; his itinerary took him to Albany, Schenectady, Great Barrington, Norfolk, Salisbury, Sharon, Smithfield, Fishkill, New Windsor, and Peckskill. He reveled in this quick tour and exclaimed in a letter from New York, July 29: "O what a new scene of usefulness is opening in various parts of this new world! All fresh work where I have been."⁶⁷

Whitefield's preaching was never more popular nor more powerful than it was during the summer of 1770. An eminent shipbuilder was invited to hear Whitefield and at first made objections, but at last was persuaded to go. "What do you think of Mr. Whitefield?", asked his friend. "Think," said he, "I never heard such a man in my life. I tell you, sir, every Sunday, when I go to church, I can build a ship from stem to stern, under the sermon; but, were it to save my soul, under Mr. Whitefield, I could not lay a single plank."⁶⁸

At the age of fifty-five, it was now eventide for the great preacher; only two months of his life remained. There was a hush and quietness in these closing weeks of his ministry; opposition was silent; none spoke or wrote a word against him. The people clung to him and were reluctant to see him leave their towns and villages. On Tuesday, July 31, Whitefield sailed from New York and arrived at New Port on the following Friday, August 3. With the exception of six days, on five of which he was seriously ill, he preached daily until his death.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Whitefield, G., The Works Of The Rev. George Whitefield, M.A., Vol. II, pages 424-425.

⁶⁸ Wakeley, J.B., Op. Cit., page 138

⁶⁹ For itinerary of these closing weeks, see page 64, "Seventh Visit to America."

The primary source of information regarding Whitefield's death is an account written by Richard Smith. Throughout the seventh visit to America, Smith had been Whitefield's constant companion and was with him when he died at 6:00 A.M., September 30, 1770. In order to present the details of Whitefield's closing hours on earth, Smith's account is quoted as follows:

On Saturday, September 29, 1770, Mr. Whitefield rode from Portsmouth to Exeter, (fifteen miles,) in the morning, and preached there to a very great multitude, in the fields. It is remarkable, that before he went out to preach that day, (which proved to be his last sermon,) Mr. Clarkson, senior, observing him more uneasy than usual, said to him, "Sir, you are more fit to go to bed than to preach." To which Mr. Whitefield answered, "true sir;" but turning aside, he clasped his hands together, and looking up, said, "Lord Jesus, I am weary in thy work, but not of thy work. If I have not yet finished my course, let me go and speak for thee once more in the fields, seal thy truth, and come home and die." His last sermon was from Cor. 13:5. "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves; know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?" He dined at captain Gilman's. After dinner, Mr. Whitefield and Mr. Parsons⁷⁰ rode to Newburyport. I did not get there till two or three hours after them. I found them at supper. I asked Mr. Whitefield, how he felt himself after his journey. He said, "he was tired, therefore he supped early, and would go to bed." He ate a very little supper, talked but little, asked Mr. Parsons to discharge the table, perform family duty; and then retired up stairs. He said, "that he would sit and read till I came to him," which I did as soon as possible; and found him reading in the bible, with Dr. Watts's Psalms lying open before him. He asked me for some water gruel, and took about half his usual quantity; and kneeling down by the bedside, closed the evening with prayer. After a little conversation, he went to rest, and slept till two in the morning, when he awoke me, and asked for a little cider, he drank about a wine glass full. I asked him how he felt, for he seemed to pant for breath. He told me, "his asthma was coming on him again; he must have two or three days' rest. Two or three day's riding, without preaching, would set him up again." Soon afterwards, he asked me to put the window up a little "I cannot breathe; but I hope I shall be better by and by; a good pulpit sweat to-day, may give me relief: I shall be better after preaching." I said to him, I wished he would not preach so often. He replied, "I had rather wear out than rust out." I then told him, I was afraid he took cold in

⁷⁰The Rev. Jonathan Parsons was pastor of the Presbyterian Church of Newbury Port.

preaching yesterday. He said, "he believed he had;" and then sat up in the bed, and prayed that God would be pleased to bless his preaching where he had been, and also bless his preaching that day, that more souls might be brought to Christ; and prayed for direction, whether he should winter at Boston, or hasten to the southward--prayed for a blessing on his Bethesda College, and his dear family there; for the Tabernacle and chapel congregations, and all connections on the other side of the water; and then laid himself down to sleep again. This was nigh three o'clock. At a quarter past four he waked, and said, "my asthma, my asthma is coming on; I wish I had not given out word to preach at Haverhill, on Monday; I don't think I shall be able; but I shall see what to-day will bring forth. If I am no better to-morrow, I will take two or three days' ride!" He then desired me to warm him a little gruel; and, in breaking the fire wood, I waked Mr. Parsons, who, thinking I knocked for him, rose and came in. He went to Mr. Whitefield's bed-side, and asked him how he felt himself. He answered, "I am almost suffocated. I can scarce breathe, my asthma quite chokes me." I was then not a little surprised, to hear how quick, and with what difficulty, he drew his breath. He got out of bed, and went to the open window for air. This was exactly at five o'clock. I went to him, and for about the space of five minutes saw no danger, only that he had a great difficulty in breathing, as I had often seen before. Soon afterwards he turned himself to me, and said, "I am dying." I said, "I hope not, sir." He ran to the other window, panting for breath, but could get no relief. It was agreed that I should go for Dr. Sawyer; and on my coming back, I saw death on his face; and he again said, "I am dying." His eyes were fixed, his under lip drawing inward every time he drew breath; he went towards the window, and we offered him some warm wine, with lavender drops, which he refused. I persuaded him to sit down in the chair, and have his cloak on; he consented by a sign, but could not speak. I then offered him the glass of warm wine; he took half of it, but it seemed as if it would have stopped his breath entirely. In a little time he brought a considerable quantity of phlegm and wind. I then began to have some small hopes. Mr. Parsons said, he thought Mr. Whitefield breathed more freely than he did, and would recover. I said, "no sir, he is certainly dying." I was continually employed in taking the phlegm out of his mouth with a handkerchief, and bathing his temples with drops, rubbing his wrists, etc., to give him relief, if possible, but all in vain; his hands and feet were cold as clay. When the doctor came in, and saw him in the chair leaning upon my breast, he felt his pulse, and said, "he is a dead man." Mr. Parsons said, "I do not believe it; you must do something, doctor!" He said, "I cannot; he is now near his last breath." And indeed, so it was; for he fetched but one gasp, and stretched out his feet, and breathed no more. This was

exactly at six o'clock. We continued rubbing his legs, hands, and feet with warm cloths, and bathed him with spirits for some time, but all in vain. I then put him into a warm bed, the doctor standing by, and often raised him upright, continued rubbing him and putting spirits to his nose for an hour, till all hopes were gone. The people came in crowds to see him; I begged the doctor to shut the door.⁷¹

On the afternoon of October 2, 1770, Whitefield's funeral service was conducted in the Presbyterian Church of Newbury Port. He had repeatedly stated that should he die in Newbury Port he would like to be buried beneath the pulpit in the Presbyterian Church there. Thus the question as to where he should be buried was settled, and after the funeral service had been completed in the church his body was interred beneath the pulpit.

There were many outward demonstrations of grief both in America and in England. Funeral sermons were preached in the principal cities of America. In Georgia, all the black cloth in the stores was bought for mourning by the people; they hung the church in Savannah in black, and the Governor and the Council led the procession which attended the memorial service. The news of his death was received in London on November 5; the London Chronicle of November 19 stated that the multitudes which went to hear the funeral sermon delivered by John Wesley in Tottenham Court Chapel and Tabernacle exceeded all belief.⁷²

⁷¹Gillies, J., Memoirs of the Life of the Reverend George Whitefield Chapter XX.

⁷²Tyerman, L., Op. Cit., Vol. II, pages 601-602, 614-615

CHAPTER VI

AN EVALUATION OF WHITEFIELD'S SOCIAL AND EVANGELISTIC WORK IN AMERICA

Almost one hundred and eighty-five years have passed since George Whitefield died on the morning of September 30, 1770 in Newbury Port, Massachusetts. Certainly sufficient time has elapsed since he ranged the American woods hunting for poor sinners to prove his essential worth and the enduring qualities of his ministry. Let us then proceed to evaluate his social and evangelistic work in the American colonies; for the sake of clarity this will be done under the following headings: His One Passion And The Controversial Figure It Made Him, His Inexhaustible Zeal, His Three Powers And His Success In Using Them, His Compassionate Heart, Regrettable Aspects Of His Career, The Enduring Fruits Of His Ministry, and Epilogue.

His One Passion And The Controversial Figure It Made Him.

One fact that has become crystal clear with the passing years is that there was one all-consuming passion in Whitefield's life, that of preaching. All other matters which attracted his attention and won his loyalty were of secondary importance to his call to preach "the truth as it is in Jesus," and to convert men "from sin to holiness, and from the power of Satan unto God." Time and time again he made the statement that he worked for a heavenly and not an earthly inheritance, and therefore his one aim was the good of souls. Both by his testimony and by observation of his intense activity we know that this was the case.

There is a sharp contrast between Whitefield and his friends, John and Charles Wesley, regarding their modes of work. The latter expounded, endorsed and defended truth; they wrote hymns, commentaries, history, and philosophy; they organized societies, and "exercised a kind of episcopal jurisdiction over thousands of loving and loyal adherents." Whitefield never stretched for profundity of thought, was not a disputant, not an organizer, but undoubtedly he was the greatest gospel orator of his age. First and last and always preaching was his task and the simple gospel was his message, and thus equipped with task and message he filled the role of evangelist with astonishing success.

Whitefield had no sooner commenced itinerant preaching in America than he became a controversial figure. There were those who were quick to discredit him and there were those who rose to his defence.

The first demonstration of opposition occurred in New York on November 16, 1739 when he was denied the use of the Anglican Church. From that time on, opposition among the conservative ministers of the Anglican, Presbyterian, and Congregational faith mounted until it reached its peak in 1743 with the publication of Dr. Charles Chauncey's book, Seasonable Thoughts On The State Of Religion In New England. This book amply set forth the conservative point of view and denounced itinerant preaching, revivalism, and enthusiasm; furthermore, Whitefield being the most prominent personality in the awakening is the chief target of denunciation. The criticism made by the conservatives, in most cases at least, was sincere and honest, and is therefore to be respected.

While being condemned by the conservatives, Whitefield was held in the highest esteem by the liberal clergy and laity. He was warmly received in the middle colonies by William Tennent and his band of evangelical clergymen. The most prominent of Whitefield's lay-supporters was Jonathan Belcher, royal

governor of New Jersey. The pastor of Boston's Brattle Street Church, Dr. Benjamin Colman, who insisted on Whitefield's first coming to Boston, became the most ardent supporter of the young evangelist in New England. The illustrious Jonathan Edwards, having been the chief figure of the New England revival a few years previously, was sympathetic with Whitefield's mission and message and actively engaged in itinerant preaching following the resurgence of revival in his section. In the South, Whitefield possessed a strong supporter in the Rev. Joseph Smith (1722-1771), Independent minister in Charleston, South Carolina. During the Whitefield-Garden controversy, Smith ably defended Whitefield's character and preaching in a sermon delivered in Charleston on March 26, 1740. (For photostatic copy of this sermon, see appendix. This sermon was discovered by the author in the Curtis Collection, University of Pennsylvania Library; because of its excellence as an apologia for Whitefield, it is included herein.)

Thus there arose two schools of opinion regarding Whitefield and his labors: the conservatives or anti-revivalists and the liberals or pro-revivalists. Benjamin Franklin refrained from identifying himself with either school of opinion; he printed for both sides and published arguments for and against the Great Awakening in his Pennsylvania Gazette. Despite his neutrality and the fact that he was a Deist, Franklin attended Whitefield's preaching on numerous occasions in Philadelphia, was intrigued with the young evangelist's earnestness and zeal and rendered him a unique service in the printing of his sermons, letters, and tracts.

His Inexhaustible Zeal

One of the amazing aspects of Whitefield's personality was his inexhaustible zeal in the work to which he felt called. His traveling among

the American colonies was extremely difficult and tiring. There were few roads and those that existed were very poor and during most of the winter season impassable; for this reason practically all his land travel was on horseback. He journeyed thousands of miles over mountain and plain, through wilderness and swamp never registering a complaint regarding hardship in travel or discomfort due to the poor accommodations in homes or taverns.

He seemed to delight in labor and apparently it never occurred to him to diminish the amount of his exertions. Morning, noon, and night he was eager to proclaim the sacred message to all who were willing to listen. He kept a record of the times and places of his ministerial labors, and it appears from this record that for the period from his ordination to that of his death, which was thirty-four years, he preached nearly eighteen thousand sermons. Only when his physical powers began to fail did he put himself on what he called a "short allowance" which meant that he preached only once on every week-day, and three times on Sunday.

His delight in the labor of the Lord caused him to drive himself with a fervor and fury which undoubtedly shortened his earthly life. Although he was said to have died of asthma, there can be but little doubt that the disease which terminated his life was angina pectoris. It was on the day before he died that he exclaimed, "Lord Jesus, I am weary in Thy work, but not of it!"

His Three Powers And His Success In Using Them

Whitefield possessed those three powers essential to great success in preaching to the masses: the power to attract, the power to address, and the power to affect. Because he was so richly endowed with this combination of powers, his ministry was phenomenal.

Undoubtedly dramatic appeal was the touchstone of Whitefield's power to attract. No other preacher before him had assembled such large congregations in America; and, all things taken into consideration, it is doubtful if any have excelled him since. When the sparseness of population in the colonies during his early ministry is taken into account it is incredible that congregations of ten, fifteen, and on some occasions twenty thousand people were assembled in Philadelphia and Boston, yet this was the case. Even more amazing are such gatherings as occurred on December 2, 1739 at Whiteclay Creek near Neshaminy, Pennsylvania when according to a Philadelphia correspondent for the Boston News Letter eight thousand people stood in the rain to hear Whitefield preach twice!

With the power of his marvelous voice Whitefield was always enabled to address his vast congregations in such clear and distinct tones that he was heard by all. His voice was extraordinary in its clearness, musical quality, and range. Any present day orator seeking to address a congregation of ten thousand in a park or field would either shout or resort to the aid of a public address system. Of course Whitefield had to rely solely upon his voice, yet he never shouted. Here is the testimony of Sir George Beaumont on the subject: "O yes; I heard that young gentleman this morning allude to 'roaring Whitefield,' and was amused at his mistake. It is a common one. Whitefield did not roar. I have been his auditor more than once, and was delighted with him. Whitefield's voice could be heard at an immense distance; but that was owing to its fulness, roundness, and clearness. It was a perfect sound voice. - - - To describe him as a bellowing, roaring field preacher is to describe a mountebank, not Whitefield."¹

¹Belcher, Joseph, George Whitefield: A Biography, page 459.

His third power was that of affecting the hearts and wills of his hearers. He did not assemble and address his thousands in vain. Believing wholeheartedly in the presence and power of the Holy Ghost, he fully expected his preaching to be made effectual by the Divine influence, and he was seldom disappointed. Through his ministry people were brought into the Christian life by the hundreds until they totalled thousands, and some have ventured to say tens of thousands.

How was he enabled to do this? The answer seems to lie in the fact that his theme was regeneration and that he preached it with earnestness, and feeling. He seldom preached a sermon without shedding tears as he pled with men to come to Christ, yet his emotion was not offensive; it was the product of his deepest feelings not of histrionics. Perhaps no one understood more perfectly than Whitefield that the heart needs to be touched if the conclusions of the head are to be obeyed. Understanding this, he poured his heart into his preaching, and when he did this he found that his efforts were divinely blessed in converting multitudes of his auditors to Christ.

In using his powers as an evangelical preacher, Whitefield soon became the dominant figure in American revivalism. As such, he increased the intensity of the awakening in the middle colonies; he renewed the enthusiasm of the Edwards' revival in New England, and ultimately witnessed the awakening of the South. Traveling from one section to another and preaching all the while, he gave unity and direction to the scattered revivals until they were fused into the one Great Awakening. By 1750, the awakening had spread like wild fire throughout the colonies; as for religious intensity, there had never been anything in America to equal it. This was Whitefield's great success on the American scene.

But what were Whitefield's particular achievements during the Great Awakening and the years of his ministry which followed it?

First of all, we should repeat that those who were converted to the Christian faith under his preaching were numbered by the thousands. Estimates of the number of converts are of course conjectural, but we can safely say that Whitefield's converts were to be found wherever he had traveled, and that is to say throughout colonial America. Furthermore, many of these converts became ministers. In the neighborhood of Boston alone there were at one time twenty ministers who owned him as their spiritual father. His work and influence in this sphere is reflected in the fact that the Presbyterian ministry in the middle colonies between 1740 and 1760 increased from forty-five to more than a hundred, and the increase had been wholly on the "New Side". Whitefield's last sermons, those which he preached within a few days of his death, touched the heart of a young man named Randall; his death sealed all the holy impressions as with the mark of God; and that young man shortly afterwards founded the Free-Will Baptist Church.

Secondly, many new churches were organized as a result of Whitefield's labors. During the period of the great awakening, the number of the New England churches alone had been increased by one hundred and fifty, and the development in the middle colonies was about the same. It would be unfair to say that Whitefield was solely responsible for the organization of all the churches which sprang into existence during this period, but the need for many of them arose as a direct result of the large number of people converted to Christianity by his preaching. The Second Presbyterian Church of Philadelphia, for instance, traces its history directly to Whitefield. This church when organized in 1743 met in the "New Building" and was composed of one hundred and forty men and women who were converted under Whitefield's ministry.

Thirdly, the influence of Whitefield's labors in America as well as in England, Scotland, and Wales led to the formation of an evangelical party in the Anglican Church. Although Whitefield was the first of the evangelical clergy in the Church of England, his intense interest in revivalism won the sympathy of a substantial group of Anglican ministers and laymen. Consequently, a party was organized within the church for the purpose of fostering the evangelical spirit and activity of the denomination. If Whitefield had organized this group as a separate sect instead of a party, there is little doubt that a religious body of considerable size and influence would have developed from it.

Finally, Whitefield prepared the way for the formation of the Methodist Episcopal Church in America. The first Methodist preachers to come to the colonies arrived in 1766; they were: Philip Embury who began preaching in New York, and Robert Strawbridge who commenced his ministry in Maryland. In 1769, the Wesleyan Conference commissioned Richard Boardman and Joseph Pilmoor to labor in America, and Whitefield welcomed them on their arrival in Philadelphia. Francis Asbury, the most zealous of the early Methodist preachers, arrived in Philadelphia in 1771, one year after Whitefield's death. In his evangelistic labors in the colonies, Whitefield had unknowingly prepared the way for the coming of the Methodists; they adopted his pattern of itinerant preaching and traveled far and wide proclaiming the unsearchable riches in Christ and calling sinners to repentance. They penetrated deep into the South and kept abreast of the advancing western frontier. As a consequence of their wide range of activity, faithfulness in preaching, and carefulness to organize their converts, the early Methodist preachers succeeded in establishing their faith firmly in America.

His Compassionate Heart

Whitefield's compassion for the unfortunate and underprivileged was first evidenced during his initial visit to America in his concern for the orphan children he found in Georgia. After realizing the plight of these children, placed under the care of anyone who would take them, he immediately resolved to do all in his power to erect a suitable orphanage for them. From that time on, the Orphan House, which he called Bethesda became his special project: he supervised its erection, determined its curriculum, worked for its growth and development, and saw to the payment of its debts. Undoubtedly, the financial responsibility involved in this benevolent work was enormous and at times proved to be a heavy burden. The offerings which he received both in America and abroad never covered expenses; consequently, Whitefield supplied £ 3,299 of his own money for the institution over a thirty year period. Such loyalty and devotion to the orphans of Georgia is a source of inspiration to everyone who is interested in the plight of unfortunate humanity.

Similar to his orphanage work, but not as fully executed was his interest in free education for the poor children of Philadelphia. During his first visit to Philadelphia, Whitefield was informed that there was only one free school (maintained by the Quakers) there, and that this school had not been able to accomodate all the children who sought admission. He was disturbed in learning this, and, as a result of his agitating the subject, the Charity School of Philadelphia was organized in 1740.

In two instances Whitefield manifested an admirable interest in the enslaved Negro. First, he wrote a letter to the slave-owners of Maryland, Virginia, and the Carolinas denouncing the cruel treatment of slaves and

pleading for the exercise of kindness, gentleness, and patience toward them. Second, he envisioned a place of refuge and educational opportunity for the Negro, and arranged to purchase five thousand acres of land on the forks of the Delaware as a site for this benevolent project. The purchase price for this large tract was £ 2,200 which William Seward agreed to pay. On October 22, 1740, Seward died in Wales before executing the final papers for the land purchase; after Seward's death, Whitefield was forced to abandon the scheme.

The Rev. Eleazer Wheelock organized a Charity School for Indians in Lebanon, Connecticut in 1754. Whitefield had always been interested in work among the Indians, but due to the constant demands of other duties had been kept from actively engaging in it. He welcomed therefore the opportunity to do what he could in undergirding Wheelock's Indian work; he called it to the attention of such people as the Earl of Dartmouth, the Marquis of Lothian, and Lady Huntingdon and secured substantial financial contributions from them for the school.

Regrettable Aspects Of His Career

If ever there was a man who was tempted to have a high estimate of himself it was Whitefield. Almost immediately after graduating from Pembroke College in July, 1736, he attracted phenomenally large congregations in London, and by 1740 he had set the middle colonies ablaze with religious zeal. The instantaneous nature of his success was marvelous but presented a serious temptation, especially for a man so young, to become proud and conceited. Whitefield, being aware of this temptation, solicited his close friends to pray that he might remain humble. Apparently their prayers were not altogether effectual, for the general tenor of some of his letters and portions of his

Journals leave the impression that Whitefield was not entirely unaffected by the thunder of applause. Undoubtedly, it is true, as his English friend Doddridge noted, that Whitefield was "a little intoxicated with popularity."

The bitter controversy between Commissary Alexander Garden and Whitefield was unfortunate and only served to discredit the character of both men. If Whitefield had been faithful to his charge in Savannah and to the practices of the Church of England, the schism between himself and his immediate superior, Garden, would never have occurred. Since Whitefield felt called to itinerant preaching, undoubtedly he should have resigned his charge.

Let us now examine Whitefield's catholic spirit about which much favourable comment has been made by several of his biographers. Although Whitefield remained a life-long member and minister of the Church of England, his work in America was not in the interest of any single religious body. He preached wherever opportunity offered: in Anglican, Congregational, and Presbyterian churches, in Baptist and Quaker meeting-houses, in the fields, or public squares. Furthermore, he made the statement that he was of a catholic spirit, and that if he saw any man who loved the Lord Jesus in sincerity, he was not very solicitous as to what outward communion he belonged. Thus in practice and in attitude he rose above denominational barriers; certainly in this sense he was of a catholic spirit.

His catholicity, however, was not as pure as it first appears, for there was a narrowness in his attitude toward certain professing Christians with whom he came in contact. He said that he loved all who loved Christ in sincerity, yet he reserved the right to judge whether or not an individual or group sincerely loved Christ. It has been said that he measured all by the measure which the angels of God use - "did they possess repentance towards God, faith towards the Lord Jesus Christ, holiness of conversation?" No mere man

has the right to take to himself prerogatives which belong to the angels of God and thus to measure the sincerity of his fellow Christians. Unfortunately, however, Whitefield did this, and in rendering a verdict his tendency was to accept those who were sympathetic with revivalism as true and sincere Christians and to reject those opposed to revivalism as enemies of Christ. The best, therefore, that can be said for Whitefield's catholicity is that it was a partial catholicity.

Whitefield's narrowness of spirit is further demonstrated in his attack upon conservative ministers. Of the Log College group of evangelicals, Gilbert Tennent was the first to criticize conservative ministers publicly; he preached a sermon on "The Dangers Of An Unconverted Ministry" in the spring of 1740. The censorious spirit which Tennent expressed was soon adopted by Whitefield who in October of that year preached in Boston upon the same theme. Shortly after delivering his sermon, Whitefield remarked, "I am persuaded, the generality of preachers talk of an unknown and unfelt Christ. The reason why congregations have been so dead is, because they have dead men preaching to them." Such scathing criticism was unnecessary and purposeless; instead of wooing and winning the conservative ministers to the evangelistic effort, it only served to increase their bitterness and indignation.

Although Whitefield died at the age of fifty-six, he had lived long enough to recognize his mistakes and to ask forgiveness for most of them. On November 19, 1744, he confessed that he was in error in saying: "Many, nay most of the New England preachers do not know Christ experimentally." On February 19, 1745, he wrote: "I certainly did drop some unguarded expressions in the heat of less experienced youth." Then again on June 24, 1748, he wrote: "Being fond of Scripture language, I have often used a style too apostolical; and, at the same time, I have been too bitter in my zeal. Wild-fire has been

mixed with it: and I frequently wrote and spoke in my own spirit, when I thought I was writing and speaking by the assistance of the Spirit of God."

Whitefield's position and activity in regard to slavery is a matter to be lamented; apparently he never recognized his mistake in this important field. Moral scruples in regard to slavery were practically non-existent in America until 1750, and Whitefield seems to have been in perfect accord with the vast majority of colonists in their freedom from qualms concerning the Negro. Only the Quakers had any conscience in the matter; yet, even in this group definite action came slowly. It was not until 1758 at the Yearly Meeting that the Friends were advised to free their slaves; three years previous, however, it had been ruled that any Quaker importing slaves would be ostracized from the denomination.

Sixteen years before these Quaker pronouncements were issued, Whitefield had begun using his influence in persuading the Trustees of Georgia to introduce slavery to the infant colony. Moreover, he had anticipated slavery in Georgia by owning a plantation and slaves in South Carolina for the financial benefit of Bethesda Orphan House; and, after slavery was officially sanctioned for Georgia in 1749, he received several slaves as gifts to Bethesda and later purchased more to be employed for the benefit of the orphanage!

Unquestionably slavery was Whitefield's moral blind spot, and this fact is nothing less than tragic. If he had used his powers in attacking this travesty on human freedom, he might have succeeded in changing the bitter course of American history which led to the War between the States. Certainly of all men on the American scene at the time, Whitefield was best equipped to affect the social conscience of the people. He had the Bible as authority; he possessed a dynamic power to attract vast throngs to hear him preach, the ability to sway their emotions and to enlist them into action. Apparently,

however, he felt nothing of this tremendous challenge; he only wrote a letter to slave-owners in the southern colonies complaining against their cruelty to the Negroes. And so, the number of slaves continued to increase year by year until by 1790 the Negroes in colonial America totalled 757,208 or 19.3 per cent of the population, and nine-tenths of this number was in the south Atlantic area.

The Enduring Fruits Of His Ministry

Whitefield's ministry was not terminated with his death; his influence continued to endure through the years not only in the hearts of his converts, but also in certain important movements and institutions.

Undoubtedly Whitefield gave considerable impetus to philanthropic work in America. His ministry came during an impressionable time in the life of America, and his constant pleading for orphans and other distressed persons accustomed all classes of people to the necessity and the privilege of bringing relief to those in need. He maintained, however, that the obligation to perform good works is derived from the Christian experience of salvation. He repeatedly and clearly pointed out the connection between acceptance with God through our Lord Jesus Christ and the necessity for performing acts of mercy and kindness.

As the most powerful and successful evangelist in the Great Awakening, Whitefield was pre-eminently responsible for setting the pattern of revivalism in America which has endured to the present day. Although the enthusiasm of the Great Awakening had begun to wane by 1744, revivalism continued as a strong influence in colonial life. The American Revolution proved antagonistic to it, but with the re-establishment of peace, revivals began again. Just before and after 1800 most of the United States was swept by a series of

revivals which had an effect almost as great as the Great Awakening itself. From 1820 until past the middle of the century Charles G. Finney was the best known of the revival preachers; he was followed by Dwight L. Moody during the latter half of the century. Furthermore, revivalism has continued to be a strong force in American religious life during the twentieth century; most recently, it has been employed by Billy Graham on a nation-wide scale with outstanding success.

Whitefield made an enormous contribution to the great missionary movements which developed in America during the nineteenth century. As evidenced by his extensive labors, he was unique in missionary zeal. Among the host of preachers and evangelists of his time who was to be compared with him for missionary zeal? His passion to reach the lost was inexhaustible, and thus more by example than by admonition, he accustomed the Church to the idea of aggression upon the kingdom of darkness. Moreover, his revivals, like so many others in Christian history, stimulated the expansion of the faith. They brought people into vital religious experience, and these people in turn had the desire to share their experience with others. Thus Whitefield's magnificent example of missionary zeal and the new life which stirred in American Protestantism as a result of the Great Awakening were the beginnings of those missionary movements which developed during the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and which made Protestantism more vigorous and wide spread than ever before in its history.

There are several institutions in America which are the fruits of Whitefield's ministry and can be pointed to with pride. His desire to provide a free education for the poor children of Philadelphia was fulfilled in the Charity School and out of that modest beginning has evolved one of America's greatest universities, the University of Pennsylvania. Whitefield was

particularly interested in the College of New Jersey as a training centre for evangelical clergy; he materially assisted the college during its early, struggling years; today it stands as one of the most beautiful colleges in America and provides training to young men and women in all branches of the arts and sciences. Whitefield's interest in Wheelock's school in Lebanon was based on its benevolent work among the Indians; that institution has undergone many changes through the years and is now Dartmouth College. Bethesda Orphanage which was so dear to Whitefield's heart, although non-existent at the beginning of the nineteenth century, was rebuilt shortly after that time and has been cherished through the years as the first orphanage in America. It now bears the name "Bethesda School For Boys" and is rendering a needful and helpful service.

Epilogue

An appraisal of Whitefield's American work would be incomplete without a clear statement of the amount of time he invested in this important part of his total ministry. Of the thirty-four years and three months between the day he entered Holy Order June 20, 1736 and the day of his death September 30, 1770, only nine years were spent in America (this does not include any time in passage to and from America). These nine years were spread over seven visits so that, although America consumed only slightly more than one fourth of his ministry, Whitefield was periodically seen and heard in the colonies from the age of twenty-three until his death at the age of fifty-six.

It is astonishing that anyone could accomplish so much in such a short time. In consecration, in zeal, and in compassion, George Whitefield was one of the most remarkable preachers of the Christian gospel ever to appear upon the American scene.

APPENDIX

The Character, Preaching, Etc. Of The Reverend Mr. George Whitefield

Impartially represented and supported in a Sermon, preached in Charles-town, S. C., March 26, 1740.

by J. Smith V.D.M.

Philadelphia:
Printed and Sold by B. Franklin, 1740

Job 32:17 I said, I will answer also my part, I also will shew
mine opinion.

My design, from this text, is to shew my impartial opinion of that son of thunder, who has lately graced and warmed this desk; and would have been an ornament, I think, to the best pulpit in the Province. Happy shall I think myself, if I can only clench the Nails this great master of assemblies has already fasten'd. Like Elihu, the gallant youth before us, I am now full of matter, the Spirit within me constraineth me. My belly is as wine which hath no vent, it is ready to burst like new bottles. I will speak that I may be refreshed. - - - Others have freely spoken their Sentiments of the wondrous man before me, and I have heard the defaming as well as applause of many. - - - I said therefore, I will answer also my part, I also will shew mine opinion. In this I design no offence, nor would I give flattering titles to any man, lest my master shou'd take me away. - - The scheme I propose is;

I- To give my opinion of the doctrines he insisted upon, and so well established.

II- To speak something of the manner of his preaching.

III- To offer my sentiments upon his personal character.

Lastly, To give you my Thoughts what providence seems to have in its view, in raising up men of his stamp in our day; almost every where spoken against, yet croud'd after and justly admir'd.

I- I shall give you my opinion of the doctrines he insisted upon among us. - - To speak more generally, they were doctrines, I am of opinion, agreeable to the dictates of reason, evidently founded upon Scripture, exactly

correspondent with the Articles of the Establishment, of great use and necessity in forming the Christian life, which I have early imbib'd from the best writers and systems, from which I have never yet seen reason to recede, and which therefore you are witnesses, I have not fail'd to introduce and inculcate, in the course of my ministry among you.

To be more particular.

One of the doctrines, which he has hardly pass'd over in silence, in any single discourse, is that of original sin; a truth so manifest in Scripture, that I am almost of opinion, it is impossible any sincere, diligent and unprejudiced enquirer shou'd miss it; for 'tis written in Sun-Beams, that a man may run and read. - - - By original sin I mean nothing less than the imputation of Adam's first sin to all his posterity by ordinary generation; which imputation is the resultance of his being constituted to act for them in the extensive capacity of a legal representative; the consequence of which, is that inherent corruption of nature, and those sinful propensions, we are now born with into the world. As to the point of imputation; 'tis a doctrine, it must be confess'd, of more intricacy, about which, it's therefore possible, a well-meaning man may labour under some scruples, while perhaps he allows of the depravity of nature. Tho' I must beg leave to express my surprise, that any person of judgment shou'd maintain this depravity, and not immediately discover the necessary connection with the imputation, and how impossible 'tis to secure the justice of God, without having recourse to it; for certainly the corruption of human nature, so universal and inseparable, is one of the greatest punishments that cou'd be inflicted upon the species; and that 'tis inflicted, appears from hence, that God made man at first upright: Now, if there be no previous Imputation, to lay a legal Foundation for this Punishment, then God has inflicted an evident Punishment upon a Race of Men, perfectly innocent, and which had neither sinn'd personally nor yet by Imputation: And thus while we imagine we honour the Justice of God, by renouncing Imputation, we, in Fact, pour the highest Dishonour upon that sacred Attribute. This, I fear, is the grand Reason, why the Adversaries of Original Sin labour so hard to explode the Depravity of Nature; for shou'd they once admit that, they are conscious they must admit Imputation too. I say, I fear, that is the grand Reason: How else is it possible a Man should question a Truth written in Capitals upon the moral World? A truth, we feel in every Power of our Souls, what we may read upon our own Hearts, and indeed stamp'd upon universal Nature within our Horizon, and which, the more righteous any Man is, the more he feels and groans under. We need not wonder then, our late incomparable Preacher should insist upon Original Sin, when we consider, not only in what an incontestible Manner he proved it, but of what vast Importance it must be. For, to give my Opinion freely, I can't think, I can't see, how the Christian Scheme can be consistent with itself, or supported with Honour, without this Basis. I look upon it, not merely as a Doctrine of the Scriptures, the great Fountain of Truth, but a very fundamental One, from which I hope God will suffer none of you to be enticed by any Sophistry of the subtle Disputers of this World, or Charms of Language. But to proceed:

Another Doctrine we have lately had, in the warmest Language, impress'd upon us, is that Pauline one of Justification by Faith alone: And here you will remember, how the Preacher vindicated himself from all Suspicions of Antinomian Error, and opening a Door to licentious Manners: For while on the one Hand he earnestly contended for our Justification, as the free Gift of God, by Faith alone in the Blood of Christ, an Article of Faith deliver'd to the Saints of old; so on the other Hand, he took special Care to guard against the licentious

Abuse of it, and wou'd not make void the Law, when he asserted, that good Works were the necessary Fruits and Evidences of true Faith; telling us plainly, and with the clearest Distinction, that a Man was justified these three Ways; meritoriously by Christ, instrumentally by Faith alone, declaratively by good Works. And believe me, my Brethren, this is the true Gospel of Jesus Christ and the Writings of his Apostles. For when Abraham believed God, was not it (his Faith) imputed to him for Righteousness? And yet, was not Abraham our Father justified by Works, when he had offer'd Isaac his Son upon the Altar? How shall we then reconcile this? Why very easily: The Act of his Faith justified him thro' Christ, and the offering of Isaac justified that Faith; the first in the Sight of God, the other in the Sight of Man. In justification, Faith precedes, Works follow after; for if Works preceeded, or had any causal Influence into our Justification, we might seem to have whereof to glory before God; but here 'tis the Free Gift of God, and Boasting forever excluded. God, when he justifies a Man, never finds but makes him holy, without Pre-vision of Merit, of which there can be no Shadow, in an Apostate Creature. No, by Grace ye are saved thro' Faith, and that not of yourselves, it is the Gift of God. And could I live the most exact Life ever Man lived, cou'd I even excel the Virtues of our pious Preacher himself, cou'd I produce as many Good Works as the Saints in all Ages, collected together, I would not for Ten Thousand Worlds, put my Justification upon them; I wou'd only consider them as bright and pleasing Evidences of the Truth of my Faith in Christ. Good Works are valuable Things; God forbid we shou'd lisp a Word against them, in their proper Place: We plead for them, we press the Practice of them, as incumbent upon all Christians; but we can't allow them any Share in our Justification before God. They may prove we are justified, but they can't justify us. No verily, not by Works of Righteousness which we have done, but of his own Mercy God saveth us. --- Hitherto then, our Preacher is Orthodox in his Doctrine, which both excludes Licentiousness, establishes the Law, and exalts free Grace, the evident Design and Language of the Gospel, and which, I am of Opinion, every Minister of Christ shou'd earnestly contend for: Because the Sinner must first see himself naked, before he will come to Christ for his white Raiment, the pure and fine Linnen, which is the Righteousness of the Saints, and which I counsel you all to buy of him.

Regeneration was another great Doctrine, which the excellent Man much insisted upon: Hardly a single Sermon, but he mentioned it, sometimes more than twice. And one, and perhaps the best of his Discourses, was ex professo upon this Subject. Nor can any Man be surprised, that a Minister of the New-Testament, should so heartily espouse a Principle, which our Lord himself began to speak, and asserted as a most fundamental Point of Christianity, indispensably requisite to Eternal Life; and this with so much Vehemency and earnest Repetition: Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a Man be born again, (from above) he cannot see the Kingdom of God. He assures us, we must be born of Water and of the Spirit. Our Regeneration results, in its Necessity, from Original Sin. They that are shapen in Iniquity and conceiv'd in Sin, must be wash'd and cleans'd; by which is not meant the mere Form and Rites of Baptism; not the washing away the Filth of the Flesh, as the corrupt Pharisees might wash their Hands and the outside of the Cup, but the Answer of a good Conscience towards God, purg'd by the Blood of Christ: For we can only be saved by the Washing of Regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost, the Infusion of a new Life, a divine, heavenly and prolifick Principle. As we are by Nature dead in Trespasses and Sins, God must quicken us by his Spirit and thro' that we must mortify the Deeds of the Body, and crucify the Flesh with its Lusts and Affections: For 'till we know ('till we feel the exceeding Greatness of) the Power of Christ's Resurrection, we have no Part in him.

We can't enter into Heaven, or if we should, our first Petition would be, to be discharg'd as soon as possible. Pleasure is the Result of Harmony. The Nature must agree with the Object. There must be a great Change upon our Nature, to make us susceptible of the Pleasures of God's Presence. Cavillers and Scoffers, I know, there are enow, in these last Days, against this Doctrine. Some Masters of Israel may ask, how can these Things be? Can a Man, when he is old, enter a second Time into his Mother's Womb, and be born again? --- Who ever said he could! Or what should it avail, if he should! But I hope, there may be such a Thing as a spiritual Birth, subsequent to the natural. May we not be again begotten to a lively Hope? May not God of his own Will do it, by his Word and Spirit? And may we not then become as little Children, and new-born Babes; born not of Blood, nor of the Will of Man, nor of the Will of the Flesh, but of God? Are we not told, in the most express Language, That which is born of the Flesh is Flesh, and that which is born of the Spirit is Spirit? Are not here two Births, one natural, t'other spiritual? I am really astonished any Man shou'd read his Bible, and his own Heart, and be a Stranger to this Doctrine of the New Birth, without which, all our boasted Morality and ethical Virtues, however splendid and rhetoricated upon, can never adorn us in the Sight of God, nor qualify us for his redeeming Love. --- True Religion is an inward Thing, a Thing of the Heart, it chiefly resides there; and consists in a right Disposition and sanctified Temper of the Will and Affections, and, as we have been lately told, in Righteousness, Peace and Joy in the Holy Ghost: Which naturally introduces another Doctrine nearly allied to this, and which was very strongly insisted upon, viz. The Impressions or (which was the Preacher's own Phrase) inward Feelings of the Spirit. And here you remember, how he guarded against the invidious Censure of assuming the Character of an Apostle. He renounced all Pretensions to the extraordinary Powers and Signs of Apostleship, Gifts of Healing, speaking with Tongues, the Faith of Miracles, Things peculiar to the Ages of Inspiration, and extinct with them. He also allow'd these Feelings of the Spirit, were not in every Person, or at all Times, in the same Degree; and that, tho' a full Assurance were attainable, and what every one shou'd labour to attain, yet not of absolute Necessity to the Being of a Christian. --- Only he asserted, that we might feel the Spirit of God, in its sanctifying and saving Impression, and witnessing with our own Spirits. And what is there in all this, repugnant to Reason? What is there in it, but what is perfectly agreeable to Scripture? How can we be led by the Spirit, or have Joy in the Holy Ghost, without some sensible Perceptions of it? Can I, at any Time, feel my Soul in sacred Raptures, burning with the Love of God, and of Christ, and all my best Passions alive? Can I feel a secret Pleasure in the Word, Ordinances and Communion of God? Can I taste the Powers of the World to come? Can I feel the Threatenings of God impressed upon my Conscience, or the Promises of Paradise working upon my Hopes? Can I groan under the Burthen of my Corruptions, or exult in the Liberty of Spirit, I may sometimes have, in a Calm and retired Hour, in the Meditation of my Pardon, and the Contemplation of Heaven and Immortality? I say, can I have all these Things in me, and do I feel them upon my Soul, and yet this Doctrine of feeling the Spirit be burlesqu'd and ridicul'd in an Age of Infidelity, and by Men, who love to speak Evil of the Things which they know not? Indeed, a sinful and adulterous Generation may seek after a Sign; But, what Sign can we give them of things, that must be known by being felt? Or what Ideas, can I convey, of Light, to the Blind, and of Harmony to the Deaf? Let God touch their Hearts, as he has done ours, and they shall feel what we feel; and what I wou'd not but feel, for Millions of Worlds. But 'till then,

'tis impossible in Nature, to represent it, in a full and adequate Light, to them; and they may as well ask mathematical Demonstration in a Point of pure Morality. This is a Doctrine I have been acquainted with, these many Years; 'tis not new or surprizing to me; You have heard me preach it scores of Times, tho' perhaps cloath'd in other Expressions; the Influences of the Spirit, the Impressions of Grace: --- And however derided by some, who set up and caress a System of rational Religion, I hope to have always Enthusiasm enough to maintain, that the Spirit of God may be felt. To conclude this Head, all the Doctrines now mention'd, are primitive, protestant, puritanick Ones; which our good old Fathers, Conformists, and Dissenters, have fill'd their Writings with; and as Dr. Watts has well observ'd, "They fill'd Heaven apace, for God was with them." Yet all that vast Reverence, with which I heard these Doctrines from the Mouth of our famous Preacher, could not win my Applause or Approbation of some few harsher Epithets and Expressions (you know what I mean) which dropt from his Lips. These, in my Opinion, may be pronounc'd Failings, but such as often attend a warm Zeal for Orthodoxy, in Points of the last Importance, arise from a Principle of Conscience, and are found interwoven with the brightest Characters. And he that has none, let him cast the first Stone.

II. I shall next give you my Opinion of the Manner of his Preaching. And here I need not say, nor can my Pen describe his Action and Gesture, in all their Strength and Decencies. He is certainly a finish'd Preacher, a great Master of Pulpit-Oratory and Elocution, while a noble Negligence ran thro' his Stile; yet his Discourses were very extraordinary, when we consider, how little they were premeditated, and how many of them he gave us the little Time he was with us. Many I trust, have felt, and will long feel the Impressions of his Zeal and Fire. The Passion and Flame of his Expressions, which were such, that I can't think my publick Character of Him (S. Carolina Gazette, No. 307) in the least exceeded the Bounds of Truth and strict Verity; only making that Allowance for Figures of Speech, which is always expected upon extraordinary Occasions, and in the Portraiture of great Characters. He appear'd to me, in all his Discourses, very deeply affected and impress'd in his own Heart. How did that burn and boil within him, when he spake of the Things he had made, touching the King? How was his Tongue, like the Pen of a ready Writer, touch'd as with a Coal from the Altar? With what a Flow of Words, what a ready Profusion of Language, did he speak to us, upon the great Concerns of our Souls? In what a flaming Light did he set our Eternity before us? How earnestly did he press Christ upon us: How did he move our Passions with the Constraining Love of such a Redeemer? The Awe, the Silence, the Attention, which sate upon the Face of so great an Audience, was an Argument how he cou'd reign over all their Powers. Many thought, he spake as never Man spoke. So charm'd were People, with his Manner of Address, that they shut up their Shops, forgot their secular Business, and laid aside their Schemes for the World: And the oftener he preach'd, the keener Edge he seem'd to put upon their Desires of hearing him again. How awfully, with what Thunder and Sound, did he discharge the Artillery of Heaven upon us? And yet, how cou'd he soften and melt, even a Soldier of Ulysses, with the Love and Mercy of God? How Close, strong and pungent were his Applications to the Conscience? Mingling Light and Heat: Pointing the Arrows of the Almighty, at the Heart of Sinners, while he pour'd in the Balm upon the Wounds of the Contrite; and made broken Bones rejoice. Eternal Themes! The tremendous Solemnities of our Religion were all alive upon his Tongue: So methinks (if you will forgive the Figure) St. Paul would look and speak in a Pulpit. And in some such Manner, I have been tempted to conceive of a Seraph, were he sent down to preach among us, and to

tell us what Things he had seen and heard above. How bold and courageous did he look? He was no Flatterer; wou'd not suffer Men to sit upon their Lees; did not prophecy smooth Things, nor sew Pillows. He taught the Way of God in Truth, and regarded not the Person of Men. The politest, the most modish of our Vices, he struck at, the most fashionable Entertainments, regardless of every ones Presence but his, in whose Name he spake with this Authority.

He delivered his own Soul, and very sharply rebuked our Balls and Midnight Assemblies; that Bane of all that's serious and religious. And I dare warrant, if none shou'd go to these Diversions, 'till they have answer'd the solemn Questions he put to their Consciences, our Theatre wou'd soon sink and perish. You may be sure, I was not displeas'd with this Part of his Conduct, when I have so often myself mention'd these Things as of pernicious Tendency to our Morals, Religion and Prosperity. And who can blame a Minister's Freedom and Zeal? What hard Measure, what cruel Treatment wou'd it be, to censure our Plainness of Speech, when our very Commission requires us, to lift up our Voice like a Trumpet, to cry aloud and not spare, to shew People their Transgressions: And when the Blood of your Souls, the most insupportable Thing in the World, must be requir'd at our Hands, if we be afraid to warn you? I'm sure, would People consider this: and that we can't possibly propose any temporal Advantage to ourselves, by striking at their right Eye, they wou'd applaud and not censure our Warmth and Freedom. I must tell you, over and again, such Things are dangerous to your Souls. They can't consist with your Christian Profession and Baptism. They tend to devour the Seeds, and weaken all the young Springs of Virtue, and to erase the most pious Impressions. But if the Voice of Ministers can't be heard, at least let the Circumstances of our Country, and the louder Roarings of Providence, awe and restrain us: For sure I am, 'tis now a Time to mourn, and not to dance; and the Scriptures severely threaten a People, that disregard the Operations of God's Hands.

III. I now proceed to shew my Opinion of our Preacher, in his personal Character and Behaviour.

Here I may take Courage, and challenge his worst Enemies to lay any Thing to the Charge of his Morals, or to arraign his Sincerity, so visible in his whole Deportment. While he preaches up Faith alone, in our Justification before God, yet is he careful to maintain good Works; and, denying Ungodliness and worldly Lusts, to live soberly, righteously, and godly. These Things, the Grace of God teacheth us; and how much of this Doctrine has he transcribed into his Life? How rich has he been in all good Works? What an eminent Pattern of Piety towards God? How holy and unblameable in all Conversation and Godliness? How season'd, how much to the Use of Edifying, all his Discourses? How naturally does he turn them to Religion? How much is he given to Devotion himself, and how does he labour to excite it in others? 'Tis indisputable with me, that he affects no Party in Religion, nor sets himself at the Head of any; Had this been his Aim, no Man living has had fairer Occasion offered; but he abhors the Spirit, he endeavours to suppress it. He is always careful to time his Sabbath Discourses, not to interfere with the stated Hours of Worship in that Church, of which he is a profess'd Member and Minister; and, in the Opinion of many People, a very bright Ornament: Because, as he told us, he would not tempt away Hearers from their proper and respective Pastors. And is not this noble and generous, a Catholick and Christian Spirit? He is not bigotted to the Modalities, and lesser Rites and Forms of Religion, while zealous enough, and very warm and jealous, in all its Essentials;

especially in the divine Honours and Godhead of his Saviour. He professes Love to good Men of every Denomination, and told us, the Kingdom of Heaven consists not in Meats and Drinks. He appears to me, a Man full of the Holy Ghost, and of Faith. Tho' his Prayers in this Pulpit were all Extempore; yet, how copious, how ardent, with what Compass of Thought, the Spirit of Grace and Supplication seem'd to be pour'd out upon him in plenty; and to kindle and animate his Devotions? He prays in Publick, in short, with that Spirit, Variety and Fluency which cou'd only be expected from a Man, who was no Stranger to the sacred Duty in private. He lives much by Faith, and above the World: Despises Preferments and Riches, of which last, I am told, he has had great Offers in Europe. His Heart seems set upon doing Good: He goes about his great Master's Work with Diligence and Application; and with such Cheerfulness, as would make one in Love with a Life of Religion: which has so many inward Springs of the best comfort, and is not that gloomy melancholy Thing, which Prejudice and Imagination makes it. He is Proof against Reproach and Invective: When he is revil'd, revileth not again; but prays heartily for all his Enemies: And that such as oppose the Truth, may be converted to it. He professes himself ready to lay down his Life for Christ, and to spend and be spent, in the Service of Souls. Such a Man has all imaginable Claim to our highest Love and Honour. I freely own, he has taken my Heart, and I feel his Reproaches, God seems to be with him of a Truth; has set his Seal upon him: His Rod has budded, and he has many to whom he can say, Ye are my Epistle. Wherever he has preach'd, he has been throng'd; and many have come to him, prick'd in their Hearts, saying, "What shall we do to be saved?" He has put a new Face upon Religion, my letters inform me, in some populous Cities and Parts of our neighbouring Continent: Given new Life to Ministers and People: Made Sermons, once a Drug, a vendible Commodity among them: Evening and weekly Lectures are set up, and always crowded with Persons of different Perswasions; while he has put a Damp upon their polite Diversions, which always dwindle, as Christianity revives. Surely no Man cou'd do these Things, I had almost said, these Miracles, unless God was with him; who gives the Increase, even when Paul plants, and Apollos waters. Had ecclesiastick Preferments been his Idol, Fame and Reputation his Motive; as he has taken a preposterous Way to acquire them, so I can never suffer myself to think, God would have own'd him so visibly, or given him so many Seals of his Ministry. Our Saviour himself makes good Fruits the general Characteristick of good Ministers; "Ye shall know them by their Fruits." Either the Fruits and Success of their Ministry, and Design and Tendency of their Doctrines, or the Fruits of the Spirit in their Lives: And which of these have been wanting in this extraordinary Man? Who can object against the Tendency of his Doctrines? And for Success his Enemies know it to their own Confusion. And who can say, his Life is unfruitful, or that he has appear'd like an immoral Man? He renders to all their Due: While zealous for the Things of God, he is a Friend to Caesar, a loyal Subject to King George, heartily prays for Him and his Royal House. May it abide before God! A Prayer, to which, I doubt not, you are all ready to say Amen. But to proceed with our Character of the Preacher, Whom hath he wrong'd or defrauded; whose Ox or whose Ass hath he taken? Say, if any Man hath found aught in his Hands: So far from it, that he seems to live, not by Bread alone, but by the Word and Promises of God; without taking Thought for the Morrow, what he shall eat, or drink, or put on. And for Charity, as it consists in Compassion and Acts of Beneficence, we have few Men like minded. In this grand Article of practical Religion, he seems to be a second Job, as well as for Patience; and deserves a good Report of all Men, and of the Truth itself. Had he been under any criminal Influence or a mercenary covetous

Temper: Had he collected Moneys for himself, in his Journyings often, and Itinerant Preachings, under the Pretext of doing it for the Poor, as he was slanderously reported; he had certainly a fair Opportunity to enrich himself: But we have seen, and plain Fact can't be denied; that he casts all into the Treasury and serves the Tables of the Poor with it. Stroling and vagabond Orphans, poor and helpless, without Father, without Mother, without Purse and without Friend, he seeks out, picks up, and adopts into his Family. He is now building Accommodations, and laying the best Foundation for their Support, and religious Instruction, without any Visible Fund; encourag'd to go on in Faith, from the shining Example of the great Professor in Germany, who began a like pious Work, with almost Nothing, and rais'd it to such Perfection, as is the Wonder and Astonishment of all that read or hear it. This is a Sacrifice well pleasing to God. The Loins of the Poor will bless him; the Blessing of him that was ready to perish, will come upon him. He hath dispersed abroad, he hath given to the Poor; his Righteousness ought to endure, and be celebrated among us. After this, let none call him, an uncharitable Man: For, what brighter Evidence of pure Religion than this, to visit the Fatherless in their Affliction? And permit me here to join in my Thanks to you, and the other charitably disposed Christians, who have shewn their Bowels of Mercy, in the late very large Collection (of 600 l.) for the Orphan House in Georgia. This is an Honour to our whole Town; and believe me, you will never be a Penny the poorer, for helping the Poor. Them we have always with us: And inasmuch, as we have done it unto them, we have done it unto Christ, and can't fail of a Reward; at least, the Reflection we make upon it on our last Bed, will give us much more Satisfaction, than what we contribute to the Support of Balls and Assemblies of Musick; to the Pride and Luxuries of Life: Nor can it fail to occasion many Thanksgivings unto God.

I now proceed, under the last Head, to give my Opinion, what Views Providence may have, in raising up Men of this Stamp now among us. And this I desire to do, with all Humility and Modesty, I pretend to no Spirit of Prophecy, and can only conjecture, and offer the Result of Observation, Reason, and the usual Tendencies of Things, corroborated by the great Promises scatter'd up and down in our Bibles; wherein, glorious Things are spoken of thee, thou City of our God! The Prophecies are usually too dark and Mystick to be fully understood. The Seals of that Book are seldom broken, 'till the several Periods of Accomplishment, which makes Time the best and surest Exp-sitor. But certainly, if we can discern the Face of the Sky in the Morning, we might make some humble and faint Conjectures at the Times and Seasons, which the Father keeps in his own Power. Now, we are none of us ignorant, how far the primitive Spirit of Christianity, had sunk into a mere Form of Godliness. Irreligion has been rushing in, even upon the Protestant World, like a Flood. The dearest and most obvious Doctrines of the Bible have fallen into low Contempt. The Principles and Systems of our good and pious Fathers, have been daily more and more exploded. And now behold, God seems to have reviv'd the ancient Spirit and Doctrines. He is raising up of our young Men with Zeal and Courage, to stem the Torrent: They have been in Labours more abundant: They have preach'd with such Fire, Assiduity and Success; such a solemn Awe have they struck upon their Hearers; so unaccountably have they conquer'd the Prejudices of many Persons, such deep Convictions have their Sermons produced; so much have they rouz'd and kindled the Zeal of Ministers and People; so intrepidly do they push thro' all Opposition; that my Soul overflows with Joy, and my Heart is too full to express my Hopes. It looks as if some happy Period were opening, to bless the World with another Reformation: Some great Things seem to be upon the Anvil, some big Prophecy at the Birth.

God give it strength to bring forth. May he especially water the good seed, his servant has so plentifully sown among us. May we remember, how we have heard, and hold fast. May we cherish conviction, --- be fix'd and rooted in our Christian faith; nor rebel against the Light, nor make shipwreck at last, by the various winds of doctrine, which are blowing upon us.

Thus have I answer'd for my part, and shewn my opinion; I have done it in the integrity of my heart. I have design'd no offence, only supported the doctrine and character of a preacher, which love and duty constrain me to honour and defend; while I preclude no man from shewing his opinion, who shall do it with the same impartiality.

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